

# Hunchback: The Lurching

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Right off the bat, let's get one thing settled. This is NOT a game about persons with any type of congenital birth defect or

malformation. It should not be interpreted as being, in any way, related to opinions or prejudices concerning such persons. Nor should it be seen as a representation of such persons. The cultural origins of the ideas represented in this game were directly spawned by Lon Chaney Sr.'s portrayal of Quasimodo in the film "Hunchback of Notre Dame". That movie was such a success and made such an indelible mark on popular culture that the idea of the "hunchback" as a kind of monster became set in the public consciousness. That idea mutated and evolved as more characters of the type were presented in various films over the next few decades. Quasimodo was probably the first of the Universal Monsters. The character of Fritz from "Frankenstein" continued the archetype. (Fritz in the original stage version of the character was not a hunchback at all, but rather a bumbling country peasant.)

In the publicity for later films, Universal numbered hunchback characters as being among the "monsters" featured in their movies. Daniel from "House of Frankenstein" and Nina in "House of Dracula" were labeled as "Hunchback" monsters on posters and in trailers for those movies. Daniel, despite being a somewhat sympathetic character, certainly qualified as having "monstrous" traits. He kills more people in that film than Dracula, The Wolf Man, and the Frankenstein Monster- COMBINED!

Nina, on the other hand, is a wholly sympathetic and benign character.



The character of Ygor, brilliantly portrayed by Bela Lugosi in "Son of Frankenstein" and "Ghost of Frankenstein", was not a hunchback at all, despite the fact that his name came to be associated with the archetype of the hunchbacked assistant of the Mad Doctor in popular culture ever since. Ygor actually only had a crooked neck, the result of an unsuccessful hanging prior to the opening of the movie.

Each game in the WoD centers on a theme. They are cautionary tales. V:TR involves sexual appetites and addictions, the ways in which they dehumanize people and can create monsters. W:TF deals with the concepts of territoriality and rage. (For an example of the ways in which these can create monsters, go to any forum and post something critical about a particular game, philosophy, politician, etc. Almost immediately, someone will leap in to ferociously defend their chosen "territory".) M:TAw warns about the dangers of hubris and intellectual pride, the dangers inherent in trying to impose our own desires on the world at large.

For "Hunchback", the underlying theme is that self-pity and alienation can create "Monsters" as surely as any other human failing. Misery feeds upon itself and, allowed to grow unchecked, can distort the individual into something warped, something unrecognizable, something malevolent. A Monster.

"Hunchback: The Lurching" is about co-dependency, self pity, despite, anger and alienation.

--Kurt McCoy (AKA: SheliakBob)

## "Just Me and Thee." Hunchback Overview

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## The Curse & Origins of the Miserable

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The supernatural creatures known as "Hunchbacks" all suffer from the effects of a malevolent spirit affliction called "The Curse". The Curse is whatever unknown supernatural agent that caused an otherwise normal human being to warp and twist into something no longer quite human. Something that is cursed for its entire life to suffer untold misery and rejection. Whatever this supernatural agent actually is, wherever it comes from, all Hunchbacks know intuitively that it is malign and that it is both the origin of their suffering and fed by misery. Hunchbacks are primarily solitary creatures. They are the rejected and ignored supernaturals of the World of Darkness. Only rarely will more than one be found in any given location. But they have managed, over the centuries that their kind has existed, to develop a sort of underground culture of their own. Among themselves, they refer to their kind as "The Miserable". Their scant records and legends, almost entirely passed down through oral tradition, are filled with conflicting explanations of The Curse and differing opinions concerning its origins.

- **Corrupted Vitae:** Some of the legends suggest that The Curse originated from the efforts of the Kindred to breed Ghoul Families to serve them. The actual creation of a Ghoul Family is very difficult and success is unlikely in any single effort. Yet, there are many such servitor families scattered about the globe. They are found wherever the Kindred exist in numbers. This legend lays the blame for The Curse on one or more of the failed attempts to create a Ghoul lineage. The vampiric vitae in the veins of Ghouls trying to procreate does not always produce viable offspring. Some are born warped and malformed, corrupted by the poisonous undead blood they were born with. Not all of these "failures" perished. Some did survive and managed to pass on their corrupted genes. A thin trickle of Kindred vitae flows down the line of their descendants and, on scattered occasions, enough of it pools in one offspring to trigger a kind of supernatural "allergic reaction". Not quite Ghouls but not normal living human beings either, the Hunchbacks are born partly dead. Either at birth or later in life, the thin pool of vitae in their veins becomes active and produces The Warping which shapes their destiny as one of The Miserable. Some scholars of The Miserable's origins even go so far as to speculate that The Warping is proof that their long distant Kindred dominators most probably were of the Gangrel Clan. The Warping is an effect of diluted vampiric vitae attempting to activate the Protean Discipline, with disastrous results.
- **Wolf-Blooded Mongrels:** Another set of legends suggests that the progenitors of The Miserable were Wolf-Blooded relatives of the Uratha. The faint touch of The Shadow upon those who share the Uratha bloodlines sometimes flares into life as one of the Wolf-Blooded undergoes the First Change and is transformed into a Werewolf. Sometimes, however, the First Change does not go quite right. Instead of producing a functional shapeshifter, the spirit touch is corrupted or distorted and only a Warping occurs instead. The Warped Wolf-Blooded become Hunchbacks, twisted and distorted by their supernatural lineage, but forever unable to claim their heritage among the Tribes of the Moon. Or among the Pure, for that matter. Not knowing the type of taint they carry, some of these beings breed with humans or with each other and The Curse was spawned. Over the ages it grows as more and more bloodlines are contaminated with mongrelized Wolf-Blood. Scholars among The Miserable point to the bestial shapes of the Feraleur as proof of a shared heritage with the Uratha. That the Uratha sometimes tolerate Feraleur Hunchbacks within their territories and sometimes even allow them to serve the Pack in some menial capacities is also cited as "clear evidence" that the Werewolves know of their kinship with The Miserable, even if they won't admit it openly.
- **Spirit-Touched:** Mystics among the Oublieur suspect that The Curse is a result of interaction between human beings and Spirits from The Shadow. Humans who are Urged or Ridden or Claimed at the time of insemination or gestation pass some of the spirit essence within them on to their unfortunate offspring. They point to the similarity in how the Hunchbacks thrive on Misery and the way in which a "Misery Spirit" would gather Essence while within a Claimed body. Some speculate that The Miserable are just a subgroup of The Claimed in which the Spirit Rider has lost conscious control of the body and is forced into an uneasy dormancy.
- **Cursed by Mages:** There are many stories, told in hushed whispers, of Hunchback ancestors who incurred the wrath of Mages during the dark days of the Medieval Witch Hunts. Witches and Warlocks have been said to curse those who betrayed them to the flames and the potency of those curses have been passed down to the unfortunate descendants. The Evil Eye, cast by a vengeful Adept with enough experience with Life magics could easily cause The Warping. There are those who

insist that ancestors of The Miserable were in fact Mages themselves. They brought The Curse upon themselves by delving into ancient ruins or forbidden books, or by looking too deeply into The Abyss--so deeply that some Thing looked back through them, bringing The Curse into the material world.

- *Scions of Prometheus*: The Miserable often find themselves working alongside Prometheans attempting the Great Work. From this close association, several rumors of Hunchback origins have spread. The most common is that the Miserable are the result of Prometheans breeding either with each other or with mortals. The first is unheard of and the latter is rare and no such union has been observed to have produced a Hunchback child. But that does not mean that such unions haven't been successful at some point in the dim past. Savants suggest that concentrated Pyros from an unnatural parent trapped inside mortal flesh inherited from the other parent creates the Hump. Alternately, the Hump could be the result of Flux contaminating a Promethean's offspring--Nature itself rebelling at this desecration of its most sacred act. The similarities between the effects of the Prometheans' "Disquiet" and the social stigmas suffered by the Miserable are enough to argue for some sort of commonality between the two types of Supernatural. The exact nature of that commonality is still very much in question, however.
- *Something...Else*: The World of Darkness is filled with many strange and powerful evils that do not readily fit into recognizable categories of the Supernatural. The most fearful legends of The Miserable suggest that they carry the mark of something darker, more evil, than any Vampire, Werewolf, Mage or Spirit-Claimed. Something utterly inhuman and Unknown that reaches through the twisted flesh of the Hunchbacks to pour its poisonous presence into an unsuspecting world. Many of The Miserable claim that they can feel such a presence, a cold malignancy, pressing through them in dark moments of fury or despair. Some say that It whispers to them in their sleep, telling them terrible secrets that they would share with others, if only their tongues could shape the words. There is a particularly unsettling account of a mad Hunchback of the Rue de Savanteurs who swore that he had proof of such a presence inside of him. What the onlookers saw when that sad creature cut himself open with surgical tools drove several of them mad and shocked the others into silence. Conveniently, there is no way to investigate these claims since the only witnesses refuse to speak about what they actually saw.

## The Warping

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Often the effects of The Curse are visible at birth for a Hunchback whose lineage carries its taint. These are the least fortunate of The Miserable since they never know the warmth of a normal life. The cold malevolence of The Hump colors every moment of their childhood. Many are cast out and shunned by their own parents. They often grow up in orphanages or a string of foster homes, each more abusive than the last. Something about the unsettling nature of the Hunchback, something deeper and more sinister than the visible deformities, causes those around them to react with revulsion and dread at their presence. It is said that Hunchback infants never cry. They watch the world with inhumanly calm eyes, waiting until they have absorbed the full measure of their misery before wailing. As children, The Miserable are often uncontrollable furies. Those who have felt The Warping at birth are virtually indestructible compared to other children. They careen about with little heed to danger or injury. They can shrug off a beating that would hospitalize a normal child, and giggle through the whole thing. Few parents or guardians are mentally or morally equipped to deal with such hellions.

Sometimes a child who is destined to bear The Curse is born normal, in all respects. The supernatural contamination lurks inside, hidden in the blood, until some later time, usually during the adolescent to young adult years. Something, usually an emotional or physical trauma, triggers The Warping. The unfortunate Hunchback to be becomes wracked by incredible pain as his bones twist and reknit inside his skin. Features became puffy and distorted, and the signature hump, a solid mass of bone and flesh, grows in. Once The Warping is over, no one would be able to recognize the sufferer. Everyone previously important in his life immediately reacts to him with repugnance and horror. Cast out, perhaps wanted for his own "murder" or disappearance, the newly transformed Hunchback flees into the night, in search of others of his kind, and for some guiding force to give meaning to his life.

## The Hump

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The most obvious aspect of the Hunchback's existence is the "Hump" itself. This Hump has nothing at all in common with the condition of Kyphosis which afflicts many normal human beings. Kyphosis involves a curvature of the spine that gives sufferers a "hunchbacked" or "roundback" appearance. It is often treatable with surgery.

The Hump is more like a supernaturally malignant teratoma. Though a Hunchback's bones are often twisted and warped in odd ways, the Hump is more than just a spinal distortion. It is a solid mass of bone and muscle tissue, packed with nerve clusters and rich in blood vessels. The Hump often weighs more than twenty pounds, though physical discomfort is the least of the miseries associated with it. The Miserable claim, almost universally, that they can feel an active "presence" of some kind within the Hump. Cold liquid stirs within it, pulsing with a beat of its own.

Sometimes a Hunchback can feel a cold "something" reaching through them from the Hump, clutching their heart or lungs in an icy grasp. Some claim that they can sense a sort of whispering coming from it or that it sends them messages in their dreams. Usually such messages are mocking or threatening, or insidiously suggestive.

The Hump is the defining characteristic of The Miserable. It is the physical manifestation of The Curse and as such is the arbiter

of every Hunchback's fate. The Hump cannot be removed or reduced by surgery. Any damage at all to The Hump is Aggravated Damage to the Hunchback. On of the few reliable ways to kill one of The Miserable is to drive a weapon into the Hump, or to keep hacking at it until the Hunchback dies. Angry Masters seem to zero in on The Hump with uncanny accuracy, despite knowing nothing of the true nature of the Hunchback's condition. Beatings or whippings will just automatically concentrate on The Hump, causing unspeakable agony to the Hunchback and leaving bruises, welts or wounds that cannot be healed in any way save through slow natural processes. As a Hunchback grows more powerful, having endured much Misery but also having learned new ways to use that Misery for her own purposes, the malevolent power of The Hump increases. The potency of its evil becomes ever more plain. It may even grow larger, sprout hair, or seem to writhe with glee as its sufferer sinks deeper into Misery.

Very old and very powerful Hunchbacks are known to exist. These creatures, possibly centuries old, have become barely more than just vast coarse-haired Humps with withered little arms and legs attached. Their heads are often half-swallowed by the tumorous substance of The Hump, with only their grief-lined faces visible, staring out of puffy flesh. While having little natural mobility, these awful Ancients are nearly bottomless wells of Misery. Their Misery has grown so great that it leaks out to infect those around them, seeping into the souls of otherwise normal human beings. The Ancients are walking Jinxes, or rather waddling ones, whose very presence can spell death and suffering to a whole town. Disasters and plagues follow in their wakes. Freak accidents and horrible Resonance distortions surround them. To those with Spirit Sight, the air around them seems to shimmer with whole schools of Misery Spirits and Pain Spirits swimming invisibly about them. They are living fetters of Misery.

That is the "glorious" fate a Hunchback can aspire to, if she lives long enough and suffers enough.

## Lurches and The Lurching

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The Lurching is the Hunchback's version of "Predator's Taint". They can feel the presence of another of their kind. This manifests in a sudden lurching toward the other, an involuntary movement and personal attraction. They are so starved for companionship and for others who share their experience and outlooks that they will try to make common cause when possible. It is a grave offense, a violation of the Lurching, to harm or kill another Hunchback. Any such offense marks the offender for life with dark blemishes visible to all other Hunchbacks. The impulse to cling to one another's company is very, very strong among The Miserable. The only way they can experience normal social interaction is with others of their own kind.

Peer groups are very important to The Miserable. Groups of like-minded or common-caused Hunchbacks are called "Lurches", because they all move in the same direction. These are the equivalents of Coteries, Packs and Covens.

Most Hunchbacks have been solitary creatures through history, but now something has changed and they are appearing in greater numbers and concentrations. Enough of them gather in some places to form Lurches and even have multiple such groupings in the same city. But that is very rare. The most common condition of a Hunchback is still a solitary creature tied to a Master and suffering a Tragic Love, without others of his kind for support or comfort.

## The Need for a Master

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The Miserable are driven to seek out Masters to obey. The origin of this drive is fiercely debated. Those who believe in the Ghoul-vitae origins of Hunchbacks say that this overwhelming desire to obey and serve a Master is attributable to the enslaving effects of vitae-addiction. Ghouls are created to serve. Ghoul families are actually bred as servants or minions. If The Curse originates from vitae-corrupted DNA, it stands to reason that those who suffer it would also suffer the slavish devotion of Ghoul to Regnant. In the case of Hunchbacks, they have no way to know that what they crave is vitae and those who can provide it. They seek out any strong Master they can find and offer service in hopes of stilling the craving inside them, without knowing that only Kindred Masters could give them peace.

Those who argue that the Hunchbacks result from Wolf-Blooded who suffer a disastrous First Change tend to believe that the need to submit to a Master is a reflection of the natural dominance hierarchies of any Pack. The Hunchbacks instinctively know that they are the least of their kind, the "Omegas" of any Uratha pack that would have them. By seeking out and offering service to a Master, they are trying to find an Alpha who will protect them.

Various arguments are put forth by the proponents of a Mage bound origin of The Miserable. Some say that the need for a Master was built into The Curse by whoever cast the spell that caused it. The Curse was not intended to just punish enemies, but had powerful Mind threads woven into it that would cause those enemies to come crawling to the caster(s) as servants or slaves. Another argument is that The Curse is a relatively new type of Branding caused by Paradox backlash. Those who have been twisted and shaped by that Branding have also felt the touch of The Abyss. They are somehow tied to Abyssal Masters who they cannot reach. So, they seek out other Masters to fill the need carved into their souls by The Abyss. A small radical group of scholars has declared that the origin of Hunchbacks can be traced back to mythic Atlantis itself. Criminals who violated the laws of that fabled Awakened City were not incarcerated in buildings. Rather they had to wear the marks of judgment upon their own flesh. These scholars claim to possess an ancient text that describes such punishment. The text supposedly details that the flesh of transgressors or subverters of Atlantean law were afflicted with horrible physical alterations. The deformities of the criminals served both to punish them and to clearly mark them as lawbreakers to all citizens who saw them. The length of time that they had to suffer in these twisted shapes was determined by the severity of their crimes. Eventually all would serve their time in penance and be restored to healthy, whole bodies once more. When Atlantis fell, such criminals could no longer achieve release from their sentences. Their cursed bloodlines have continued down to this time. According to these radicals, the Hunchbacks seek to serve some Master because they instinctively know that the only peace they can find comes from those above them, those qualified to judge them. Another speculation offered by these sages is that somehow there is a link between the Hunchbacks either the Heirarchs or the Oracles, or maybe both.

Whatever the origins of their need, Hunchbacks do crave protection, guidance and purpose from the Masters they seek out. Without a Master, the Hunchback must face social rejection and persecution alone. There is no one to turn to for respite from the scorn they find among normal humans. Only by service can they expunge the stain of their Curse and gain approval. Only by service can they acquire a goal, a purpose important enough to make enduring The Curse bearable. Without Masters, most Hunchbacks quickly deteriorate and become insane.

## The Search for Love

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Every human being or near human creature needs Love. The feeling of being cherished, protected and nurtured is part of the growth process for any normal person. As adults we seek out mates, companions, and confidants. They do more than simply complete us, more than make life a little more bearable. They provide our lives with meaning, with purpose. Our very natures as social creatures drives us to seek approval and affection. None of this is necessarily true for The Miserable. The Curse that inhabits their warped bodies works ACTIVELY to separate them from any hope of warmth or companionship. The more desperately they crave affection, the more vile the rejection they are likely to find. The Curse isn't just a physical malady. It is a spiritual taint that distorts everything about the Hunchback who suffers from it. Simple, normal emotions are twisted, magnified, turned grotesque by the lens of The Curse. A well-intentioned smile may seem a bestial leer, or a sinister smirk to the normal human who witnesses it. The more desperately the Hunchback tries to express her desire for companionship, or simple acceptance, the more vile and oily and perverse her expressions and actions will seem to the target of her affections. Additionally, The Curse actually intensifies the feelings of loneliness and rejection any Hunchback feels when they fail to please the objects of their affections. The Misery produces by such failures is purer, more potent, than any normal Misery the Hunchback may suffer. Love cuts like a knife. Then it twists in the flesh. Then The Curse pours lemon juice on the wound! Such is the

## doomed nature of Love for The Miserable

Systems: When dealing with a Tragic Love, any Misery generated is doubled. If the Hunchback manages to achieve an Exceptional Success through a Social interaction with their Tragic Love, they can gain 4 Willpower. (This is in addition to any Willpower gained by catering to their Virtues or Vices.) A Botch in such an attempt will NOT generate any Misery at all, but will cause the Hunchback to suffer from the Depression Derangement (-1 to all die pools) until such time as at least a single success can be gained in another Social action attempt.

Tragic Loves may make the lives of The Miserable seem almost bearable, sometimes, or a hell in flesh--more often. Without a Tragic Love, though, the Hunchback has no means to reach their own inner humanity, or to benefit from their own strengths. A Hunchback character without a Tragic Love cannot gain Willpower through any Virtue. The Tragic Love is the focus of the Hunchback's emotional life, and the personification of everything the Hunchback believes to be good and kind. Or at least tolerant. A Hunchback without a Tragic Love can always gain Willpower through Vice as normal. The Curse encourages its victims to debase themselves and give in to their own inner demons.



## Misery, Twists and The Curse

The most twisted thing about the Hunchback's existence is the fact that while they suffer from rejection and hostility, such feelings actually feed the supernatural force inside them.

A Hunchback who tries to befriend a child, smiling grotesquely and offering a flower perhaps, experiences the pain of rejection when the she screams in horror and runs for the nearest parent. But that pain adds another point to the supernatural "charge" building up inside the Hump, which is itself a Presence in the Hunchback's life. A cold, throbbing, malign weight forever crouched on his shoulders. something almost alive with hatred and malevolence.

That reservoir of pain, distilled Misery, stored within The Hump can be used by Hunchbacks. They can tap into that charge for energy that allows them to Warp reality around them. They can will strange changes in their own bodies or effect the thoughts and emotions of those around them. They can defy the laws of nature in unsettling ways. These powers, a whole, are called "Twists", since the Hunchback can feel her power to twist reality, to roll it in her fingers like putrid dough and force it into shapes of her choosing.

The Curse that is the origin of the Hunchback's condition, regardless of exact nature at birth, works to fulfill itself in everyday life. Misery builds up like a well of cold energy inside the hump and can be tapped into to fuel supernatural abilities. The Miserable literally have to seek out deliberate rejection, horror and punishment in order to acquire the energy that fuels their powers. That's why they always have a Tragic Love. Along with the human need for affection, such a relationship is an endless source of Misery. Every Hunchback is forced, by their own nature, to become an emotional masochist. Forever trying to be accepted, seeking love and the approval of a master, but always finding bitterness, rejection, and belittlement.

(It's a Curse! Not a kewl power.)

## Marques

The distinctive forms that The Curse inflicts on its victims have come to be called "Marques" by The Miserable. While the individual distortions and deformities a Hunchback may manifest are very distinctive, there are five larger "types" of the affliction. Savanteurs debate the possibility that these differing manifestations of The Curse might suggest that there was more than one origin of the supernatural malady. Most Hunchbacks don't care where their afflictions came from. They are more concerned with

trying to endure them. The names by which the Marques and the Twists used by Hunchbacks are called originate in various languages, sometimes garbled or combined in strange ways. The Miserable have been mostly illiterate over the ages and only oral traditions, distorted and mutated by journeys and addled memories, link them to their historical predecessors. Some of the Ancients are still around, vast and bloated, curled into impossible shapes or crushed under the vast mound of the Hump. These old ones are the root source of most of the Hunchbacks' traditions. Their history is preserved in the babbling of creatures long driven mad by the immensity of their Misery. Though the Marques are passed down through bloodlines or through the Rites of Warping, those who carry them rarely come together to form common interests separate of those shared by others. There just aren't enough of them in any given area to make forming separate power bases or institutions viable. Most Hunchbacks are solitary creatures. The Lurch is the largest social unit of The Miserable, and that may be made up of members carrying any of the Marques. Still, there are very distinct physical similarities between Hunchbacks bearing the same Marques and they often share similar experiences. That is enough to keep the concept of the Five Marques constant among Hunchbacks across the world.

## Carabeau



The Carabeau (car-Ah-BOW) are a line of Hunchbacks whose Marque twists and distorts their bodies, but leaves their faces unblemished, even enhanced. The beauty of their features just makes the ugliness of their bodies harder to take, and they are very sensitive to rejection by those whom they trust. A Carabeau Hunchback gains the "Attractive" Merit for free--a mocking gift from The Curse. Carabeau can designate Presence number of Mortals with whom they live or work as intimates. The Hunchback can use her Social Attributes without penalty, with these designated persons only. At least once per scene in which the Carabeau interacts with a designated intimate, a Composure roll must be made. Any successes on this roll means that the person interacting with the Hunchback reacts normally to her presence and treats her normally, as a co-worker, friend or confidant. The Hunchback can make a Manipulation roll or a Manipulation-based skill roll. Any successes on this roll add that number of dice to the intimate's Composure roll.

If the Composure roll is a success, the Hunchback gains one Willpower point, her confidence bolstered by being treated as a colleague, or just a normal human being.

If the Composure roll is a failure, then that person is caught cringing away from the Hunchback, staring at the Hump, stammering after a verbal faux pas, or simply looking at the Hunchback with pity instead of treating her normally. Such a failure costs the Hunchback 2pts of Willpower, as her confidence around her dear friend/co-worker, etc. is shaken by the slip.

If the Composure roll is a Dramatic Failure, the designated intimate is suddenly overwhelmed with disgust and revulsion. Their composure to this time has been a painful act that they can no longer maintain. They spew out the suppressed disgust in a venomous outburst, or cruelly crush the delusions of equality or romance that the Hunchback might be entertaining. With a Dramatic Failure, the designated intimate no longer can be interacted with normally. The Hunchback suffers the normal Social Attribute penalties with that person henceforth. (No "Nine Again" and "1's" subtract from Successes.) In addition, the Hunchback will have a -1 modifier to all Skill rolls and Mental or Social Attribute rolls while in the presence of the former intimate. Regardless of how the Composure roll turns out, the Hunchback does not reap Misery for any failures on the dice roll.

Carabeau gain a +1 Intelligence bonus and another point that can be added to either Presence or Manipulation.

The signature Twist of the Carabeau is: Masque

#### In Their Own Words:

*Vivette Beaumains* (Carabeau hand and face model) "Sure, I understand that I can't do the same jobs as the other models at the agency. I'm never going to be a Supermodel. But all the public will ever see of me is my hands and my face. They'll believe that I'm beautiful, and that's all I need. I just love my photographer, Raoul! He's very, very talented and he always knows just how to shoot me so that only my beauty comes through. He sees me with the eyes of love and so he sees only beauty where others would gawk at my twisted body. I just know it! I trust my manager Ricardo completely. He's strict and pushes hard, but he's always known how to market my talent and he's managing my money so I don't have to worry about it. Sometimes he asks me to...do things for him. Special things. But that's because he knows he can trust me the way I trust him. Completely."

*Smilin' Jackie-B* (Carabeau radio personality) "HEY! HEY! HEY! TOP o' the morning to you! Are you ready SMIIIIILE, Pittsburgh? I bet you are! Whoa, now! Don't waste your sunshine smilin' at ME! I can't see you, Sillybones! It's RAY-DEE-OH! Remember? Smile at that guy in the car next to you! Give that perky young thing at the counter a big ol' teethy happy-mouth! But don't blame me if she slaps ya! Gotta take yer own chances, my Man!"

- shuts off mike\*

"This job is the SHIT! I sit here in a little aluminium sided box ontop of a skyscraper and yackety-yack at a fuzz-covered microphone for six hours a day. I pull in a 5.7 share with practically no overhead. Everybody in Pittsburgh knows my name, but NO ONE knows about my "affliction". People love me, baby! They love me, and they don't even know that I'm...y'know. All they hear is the voice and they can love the voice. They might never be able to love ME. But they can love the Voice. And Man, that's got to be good enough for me. It's got to be enough to keep me going! Right? 'Cause Lord knows, I ain't got nothing else. Nothing else at all."

*Ulysses Stanley "USD" Dawson* (Wealthy Investment Broker) "Right now, standing here, I am currently worth 34.5 million dollars. USD. I may be bent up worse than any goddamn pretzel, but I've still got my brains and I can still read a stock report. God Bless Internet Trading!! I live in a penthouse. I drive a Porsche. Well, I have my driver Alfredo do the driving. Hard to reach the pedals with these curled up legs. But the Porsche is mine! With a phone call I can make or break any businessman in the city. With two calls, I could make him jump out a window. With three calls, I'd be with his wife when he did it! YEAH, Baby! That's POWER! POW-WAH! 'Course, it is lonely at the top. I...don't have time for much partying. I'm always working on my next big acquisition. My portfolio is my true love. Yeah. Sure, I miss the Romance and all that. But I can afford the best escort services and call girls in the business, so it's not like I'm SUFFERIN' or nothing. The only human beings I'd say I love would be Trudy, my secretary and Alfredo my driver. They're the ones who keep me going when it gets...difficult. The only Boss I have is the SecureNet Investments Network, LTD. The Company made me everything I am. I would do anything to protect the Company. ANYTHING. You wouldn't believe the things I've already done, to get to where I am now. Would NOT believe!"

## Feraleur

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The beast/wild splat. These Hunchbacks seek the wilderness and friends among the animals. They have bonuses to stealth and survival rolls in the wilds or woods, but suffer penalties when they have to come into towns. They can talk to animals and possess powers similar to Animalism. Each one has at least one beast-like feature--fangs, feline eyes, hairy to furry bodies, claws, hooved feet etc. With each failed Morality based Derangement they acquire another until they are no longer recognizable as anything human. Wild Man. The character avoids civilization as much as possible and is only content when in a natural setting. (Can include a park or garden.) Most prefer complete wilderness or deep woods. Feraleur suffer a -1 Penalty to all dice pools while not within a "wilderness" area. They are unaccustomed to civilization and are easily frightened or startled while on unfamiliar territory. Feraleur gain a +2 Bonus to Dice Pools Athletics and Survival in the wild, and they may use their Social Attributes without penalty when

interacting with wild animals.

Feraleur characters get one bonus dot in Stamina and a second bonus dot that can be added to either Dexterity or Wits.

The signature Twist of the Feraleur is: Betemismo

#### In Their Own Words:

*Hairtoad* (Swamp Monster) "grrrr! Stay back! Stay back, Skinny-Skin! This be's Hairtoad's swamp! These be's Hairtoad's trees! Those be the hides of Hairtoad's friends you 'ave in that baggie-bag-bag of yours! All limp and floppity. Left da' meat on de ground for de bugs and crawlies, didnya? Capon, I think you be crawlin' out of da' mud tonight wi'out yer skinny-skin! Ugly, naked monkey-monks! Always comin' in here and killin' Hairtoad's friends! WHY? What we evah do unto yousies and yours? Now you gets to pay! Pay da' price of de' Swamp! I gots me a pot of oil a-burnin' back yonder already. I do loves the taste of Man-rinds! HAARRRRRAAAARRRRRR!"

*Crouches in the Dark* (Shaggy Skunk Ape) "Eyes in the night! That's what I be. Peepin' and watchin' and stalkin' behind the hikey campers. Sees everything, I do! From under branch and bough, behind stump and stone, I watch. I WATCH! I tell the Great Wolves what I see, too. The Man-walking Beasts! I am their friend! I dance with their tribes! I gnaw on the bones they leaves behind. They snarl but never bite. I am friends with the Purest Ones and the Ones that Fosake. I hear the whispers of their masters, the Toe-Tims. Someday, I will talk to the Toe-Tims myself, and maybe, they will tell me why I am the way that I am! Or, maybe, they eats me. Either way, I know more than before, eh?"

*Bennie Snack* "The Rat Man" (Subterranean Urban Savage) "Chee! Chee! Chee! Funny scrunchy face you make! Chee-chee! You surprised that ol' Bennie, he eats the rats, aren't you? You done heard that crazy, bent-up ol' Benny lives with the rats. Runs with the rats. Looks and smells like the rats. Worships the rats. That what you heard? Chee. Well, what else do you see down here to eat, scrunchy-face? Shit and worms? \*spits\* I eat the rats 'cause they're here. And they're clean. They taste yummy-yummy too! Little bit like Chuahahua, but not as spicy. Yah. Bennie, he live down here with the rats! Sleeps in piles of 'em to keep warm. Eats 'em when I needs to. Someday, I think, they all get 'gether and eat ol' Bennie. Then we be equals, no? Chee-chee-chee!"

## Malvisagi

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Pronounced "Mal-veh-SAJ-ee"

The "monster" splat. They are the most hideous of the hideous. Their horrid faces and twisted bodies don't inspire just revulsion and disgust, they cause normals to strike out blindly--reacting with violence with even one failure on their Composure roll. That makes the Malvisagi lurkers in the dark, dwellers in sewers, catacomb roamers and hermits in the empty places of the earth. Skulker. Hides in sewers, deep basements, subway tunnels, etc. Truly monstrous visage that inspires extreme horror in those who see it. (Nightmare like ability) Stealth abilities and can always find secret ways into buildings. Horrible stenches capable of disabling/stunning opponents. Complete night vision, enhanced senses for navigating underground. Eyes very light sensitive, suffers penalties when confronted with bright lights.

Malvisagi characters can see and operate normally in complete darkness. They suffer a -1 Penalty for actions taken in low light but illuminated situations, -2 for actions in brightly lit areas, and -3 for actions in open sunlight.

They can navigate through cramped and winding sewers, tunnels, crawlspaces or other underground spaces at regular movement rate. (Standard Base Movement halved, as with all Hunchbacks.)

The Malvisagi are adept at finding secret ways into buildings, especially older buildings. On a successful Intelligence roll, a Malvisagi will be able to find a sewer opening, drain, or utility access space that allows entrance to any building in an urban center. (Small towns and rural locations do not have the intricate underground networks that the Malvisagi depend on.)

The faces of the Malvisage are truly hideous. They might have a face entirely full of boils or cancerous growths with eyes peering out of sunken sockets. They might have deviated septums or wildly misplaced features. Hairy growths are common, as are seeping pustules. The result of this hideousness is that whenever a Malvisagi is spotted above ground, human observers must make a Composure roll to avoid being overcome with fear. On a totally failed roll, the observer will run screaming or faint. On a Dramatic Failure, they will lash out violently and call for assistance. Malvisagi only get 1 die for Social Attribute dice pools when interacting with normals while in plain sight. By lurking, speaking from the dark or deep shadows, they can use Social Attributes as normal--with the -1 Penalty all Hunchbacks have for such rolls.

Malvisagi get one bonus point in Dexterity. A second bonus point can be added to either Wits or Stamina.

All Malvisagi characters must take a Physical Defect Flaw, in addition to The Hump and the usual Hunchback traits. (Missing or useless limbs, missing or impaired senses, dwarfism or giantism, albino, etc.)

The signature Twist of the Malvisagi is: Vilainize

### In Their Own Words

*Squick* (Gooey, boil-faced slime-midget) \*in a deep well-inflected Baritone voice\* "What I enjoy most is the dichotomies of expectation vs. reality. The look of bafflement turning to horror on their faces when they realize that the educated, precise, mannered voice they are hearing comes from THIS oozing corkscrew of a body. Most of them can't even scream, right away. Their jaws do this odd silent quivering thing for awhile and they blink about a thousand times before they can choke out the scream they were looking for. Cracks me up every single time!"

*Dr. Grue* (Occultist and graverobber) "I work for FRANKENSTEIN! \*geeh-heeee-heeee-hee\* Really! Well. Not the original Frankenstein. Not the one you see in the movies. No. But my Master, he calls himself "Diogenes", says that he is a direct lineal descendent of that original monster. \*haawwwk--spit\* Excuse me. Anyway, this stitchjob tells me that he's planning to make another one like him, y'see? Some sort of Great Work that he needs to become a real human boy. Or something like that. Only thing I cares about is that he treats me like a friend and is always saying that he couldn't do this Great Job of his without my help! \*ghe-heeee-heee-hee\* So's I go's out and digs up graves for him and cuts up bodies so he can use only the best parts. He frowns when they are still kickin' and beggin' when I cuts into them. But we both know, there's nothing like FRESH for quality parts! \*geeeeeeee-heeeeeee--hahhk\* Nothing like FRESH!"

*Garjean* (Subway Ogre) "Gaaaaah! Go 'WAY! Bright light! Eyes on fire! Gaaaaaaaaah!" \*snuffle\* "Bad light. Light bad. Bright light bad. Bad, Bad Bright. Love eyes full of cold, cool darkness! Now. GO 'WAY!!"

## Oublier

Pronounced "OO-blee-OR"



The mystic/occult splat. These Hunchbacks are sensitive to the presence of other Supernaturals. They are the wizards' apprentices, the necromancers' bodysnatchers, speakers to ghosts and seers of spirits

All Oublieur characters get a bonus point in Resolve. They get a second bonus point that can be added to Intelligence or Manipulation.

Oublieur are generally, but not universally, pale with large eyes and clammy skin. They have soft, snickering voices and rarely talk above a hoarse whisper.

They have a unique affinity for the Supernatural. Supernatural creatures and entities will not perceive an Oublieur as hostile or a threat. Most will simply ignore them, as long as they stay out of the way. An Oublieur character can buy any Supernatural Companion or equivalent Merit at half normal cost (round up). They can specify a Supernatural as an Ally, Contact, Mentor or Patron (Master, of course) when buying Backgrounds.

The signature Twist of the Oublieur is: Fantasmira

## Punchello

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The most "social" of the Marques are the Punchello. Theirs is the oldest oral history among the Miserable. They may have been the first to gather into Lurches and travel with their own kind. Once, as court jesters and fools, they sat at the right hand of Lords and Kings. They spoke the cruel truths no one else dared say, hidden behind the mocking grin, the snickering laugh. There are tales that once the Vampires of the Invictus declared war on the Punchello. Hunted them into obscurity as punishment for their daring one "jest too many. Even into the Modern Nights, the Invictus shun these Hunchbacks above all others, refusing to take them as servants. Often refusing to let them live in the same domains. The Punchello are the only ones of the Miserable who walk freely among mortals. By cunning and deceit, by flattery, by adding make-up to their already grotesque features, the Punchello convince mortals that they are nothing more than performers. They travel with circuses and carnivals and in small groups of their own. They are the scary "clowns" in dark vans who haunt schoolyards. With pale to bleached white skin and blood red lips, these are the clowns, acrobats, performers etc. They can use their Social Attributes without penalty, but only under very precise circumstances. Normals tolerate them because they see them as amusements first and monsters second.

Punchello gain 1 bonus pt to Presence and one point that can be added either to Intelligence or Dexterity.

The signature Twist of the Punchello is: Regale

### In Their Own Words:

*Mr. Timm* (Children's Show Clown) "Oh, I just a-DORE working with children! So sweet, so innocent! I love the way they giggle and shout. Sometimes, though, they start screaming and screaming and screaming and you just have to shake them until they shut up and never do it again. I love them with all my heart! Especially li'l Baby BeeBee! Oh isn't she just a livin' doll? Her mother

is just a beastly brute of a bitch though! One of these days I'm going to have to take her away from that harridan, and give her Ice Cream-Candy Days for the rest of her life! Won't that be nice?

*E-Gadd* (Co-host of "Chiller Horror Midnight Movies") "Funny, isn't it? Every Saturday night we show movies about vampires and werewolves, ghosts and the Frankenstein Monster. We make jokes and we show drawings of the monsters sent in by our fans. But I'm the only one on the show that knows that monsters really, really DO exist. I've met all of the above, including the Frankenstein Monster, I'll have you know! Hell, on the show we have a "Mad Doctor", a "Grave Robber", a sultry "Vampiress"--and me. E-Gadd. The crazy Hunchback servant. Joke is, I'm the only one who really IS what we appear to be. I'm the only real monster on the show! I've got the others fooled into thinking that I'm just "eccentric" and like to do my own make-up. They never ever see me "out of character", which they think shows my devotion to my "craft". Pompous fools! Except for Countess Coagula! She is a sweeeet babe! I keep my eyes out for a chance to help her become an real vampire. I think she'd like that..."

*Skeltina Danse* (Mime and Interpretive Dancer) \*speaking Sign-Language through an interpreter\* "The Grotesque and the Beautiful! Isn't it a wonder that I embody both? These long, long legs, this slim tight belly, these big soft breasts...oh yes. I see you looking at them. Go right ahead! It's okay. I like attention. That's why I'm a performer! So, there are all these beautiful parts, but right there, at the top, like some kind of bunched up pillow, is the Hump! It pushes my head down and pulls my arms up so they can only hang down at an angle. It is soooo heavy that I cannot walk without tottering. I am so top-heavy I can barely walk at all, unless I run and dance. You can stop looking at them now. \*big too-wide slice of a smile on blood red lips\* I do my little dances and totter about, trying to get out of imaginary boxes, and the people don't quite know what to think about what they are seeing. Eventually, I'll wear out my welcome and have to move on to another park or corner. That's okay too. They hate me because they know I'm a MIME! Everybody hates Mimes! They don't know anything about how...Miserable I am!" \*twirls unsteadily\*

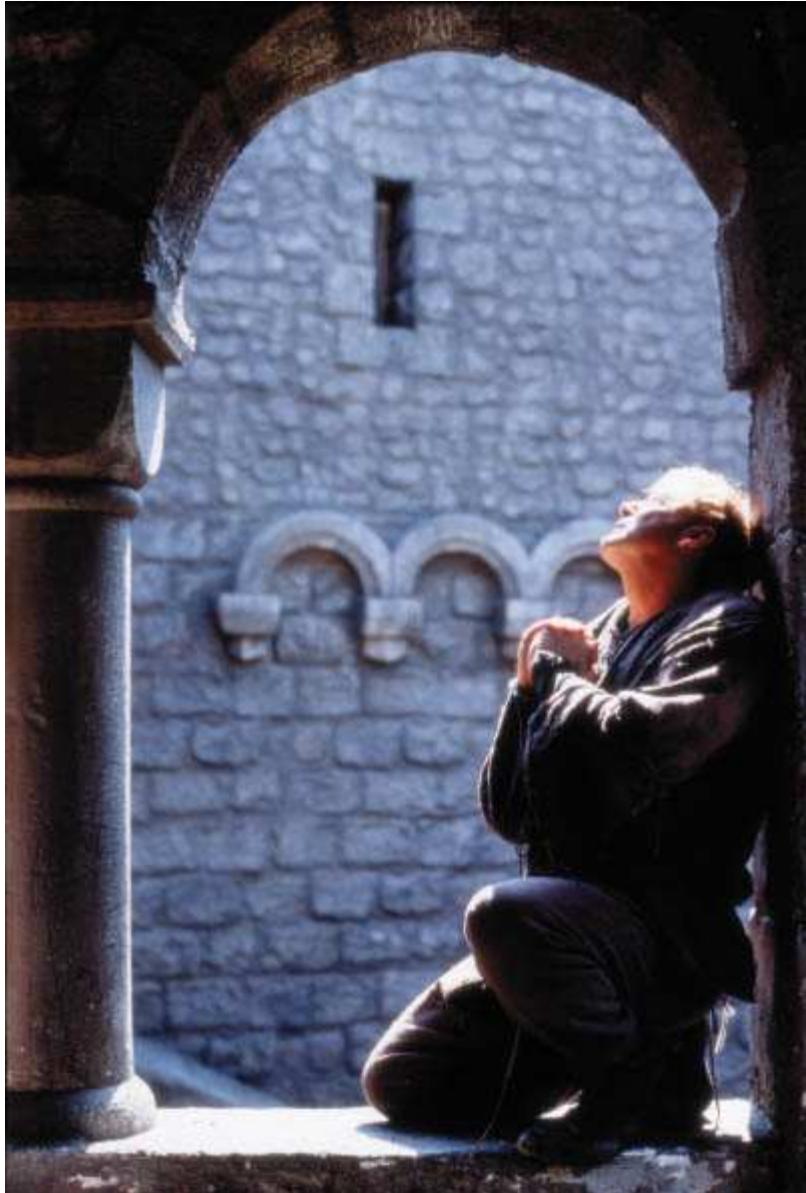
## Sanctuaires

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Sanctuaires define where a Hunchback turns for hope and protection. A Hunchback's Santuaire determines the type of Master he will seek out. In truth, the names of Sanctuaires have been assigned by Savanteurs who study The Miserable. Your average Hunchback will not call himself a "Concordian" or a "Mabuse". Most have no idea what the Sanctuaires are, let alone what they are properly called. Despite this lack of generally agreed upon terminology, once a Hunchback has chosen a Sanctuaire, albeit unconsciously in most cases, he will never leave it to seek out another. The Sanctuaire sought out by a Hunchback is a deeply ingrained part of his personality, something that is woven into his very identity. This obsessiveness is probably caused by The Curse in some manner. Hunchbacks will only believe in one hope, one road to normalcy, one source of protection from the evils of their world. They will never abandon it, never give up seeking it out, following their own roadmap to salvation, until the day they die. And some times, not even then.

## Concordian

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The Concordians believe that no single person could ever overcome their revulsion enough to accept a Hunchback, but that larger impersonal organizations or institutions might be able to accept them. They seek to lose themselves inside a communal institution of some sort. Their masters are the churches, orphanages, hospitals, monasteries, asylums in which they have sought refuge. As long as they are inside their "patron" haven, they are virtually unbeatable. Outside, they quickly wither and weaken, become overwhelmed by the crowds of individuals around them. They are agoraphobics in many cases, marginally functional in others. Concordians may use their Master Bonus for actions that are crucial to the safety and functioning of their Sanctuary. Evil landlord about to foreclose on the orphanage, its resident Hunchback can act to neutralize the threat, either by acquiring the necessary funds or by liquidating the person initiating the threat. Concordians suffer a -1 Penalty to all actions attempted outside their chosen haven. This penalty increases by 1 for every additional day that they are absent from their refuge. But, they gain a +2 bonus to all dice pools as long as they are inside their institutional sanctuaries.

The signature Twist of the Concordians is *Institutionale*.

## Mabuse

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The Mabuse turn to Science and Medicine for hope of a cure. They are the assistants to Mad Doctors and Mad Scientists. They seek out crazed surgeons, hunt down those scientists shunned by their peers. The Mabuse are mostly rationalists, believing that modern science and medicine is surely more than a match for the misery of The Curse. They tend to feel a sense of identification with the shunned Madmen they seek out. The Mad Doctors and Mad Scientists of the world are as shunned, as rejected, as mocked as they are. The first thing a Mabuse will do when she has found such a Master is say, with all earnestness and sincerity, "I believe you! You're absolutely right! Those fools just couldn't understand your genius!" or anything else to validate the ego of their new Master. Those Masters buy it hook line and sinker, almost every time. They need the support and validation of their Hunchback servants almost as much as the Hunchbacks need them. The Mabuse generally have technical knowledge related to their master's area of expertise (represented by at least a 2 in the appropriate Skills). Mental Attributes are almost always Primary.

The signature Twist of the Mabuse is: Alchemie

## **Mondelora**

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They believe that the only way to hold on to humanity, to seek out love and compassion, is to involve themselves as deeply as possible with the mortal world around them. For masters they turn to people who are important to them or to society. Parents, the rich, managers, agents, wherever they can find a niche for themselves. They have become adept at manipulating those around them for their benefit

The signature Twist of the Mondelora is: Pathetique

## Outrevie

They turn to the Supernatural for hope. Knowing that they are not just "malformed" but actually supernatural themselves, they seek out masters who are also supernatural in the hopes of finding companionship and a place they can fit in.

The signature Twist of the Outrevie is: Surnaturelisme

## Savagine

They are beast masters, leaders of packs of wolves, friends of bears and puma. They speak with totem spirits and are sometimes befriended, or at least tolerated by the Uratha

The signature Twist of the Savagine is: Wildeweise

## Abandonnai

They have given up all hope of acceptance, all need for a "Master" to direct & protect them. They reap fear instead of disgust, revel in violence and destruction. Some live quieter lives of solitude, hidden away in ruins or abandoned buildings.

The signature Twist of the Abandonnai is: Puissance

## Twists

Twists are the supernatural powers that Hunchbacks can use by focussing their Misery and Willpower. They are the equivalent of Disciplines, Gifts, Arcanum etc. Hunchbacks receive 1 dot in the signature Twist of their Marque, one dot in the signature Twist of their Sanctuaire, and two dots that can be spent on any Twist, except those developed by the Rues. (Only members initiated into a specific Rue can learn or use the Twists unique to the Rue.) These two additional dots can be used to add one or more additional Twists to the character's repertoire, or they can be used to increase levels of existing Twists.

## Alchemie

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(\*)"Gas Mask"--By spending 1 Misery, the user becomes immune to any gaseous chemicals, including poisons and tear gas. This Twist requires that the user's face be covered with some sort of "protective gear", which can be anything from a handkerchief wrapped/held over the nose and mouth to a plastic or rubber Halloween mask to a genuine vintage gas mask, even if it doesn't have the necessary filters in place. In addition to the main use of this Twist, a Hunchback can also spend 1 Misery to add dots in this Twist to a Stamina Roll to resist ingested or injected poisons.

(\*\*) "Pharmacist's Fingers"--Requires access to chemicals and laboratory equipment, though both may be rudimentary (in a pinch a well-stocked janitor's closet with a couple of borrowed test tubes and a Bunsen Burner will do). The user can mix chemicals to produce either Soporific or Poisonous compounds. These can be made into liquid, powder or paste forms. User spends 1 Misery to roll Intelligence + Alchemie. Number of successes resulting is used for the dice pool of the chemical produced. Use this dice pool to determine damage. One Health Level per success of poison. Bashing damage if drug is intended to cause unconsciousness. Lethal if it is intended to do permanent damage. Damage rolls for the chemical continue 1 per turn, until no successes are rolled at all. No normal, non-supernatural, antidote can be created for the compounds produced by this Twist. Additionally, the user of the Twist can spend Willpower on each or any of the damage rolls to produce automatic successes. Such expenditure must be announced before the roll is made. In effect, the "drug" produced is more a manifestation of the intentions of the User than any product of Chemistry. A wide variety of effects can be specified when the drug is created. Hallucinogens will incapacitate through Bashing damage, but the victim is rendered insensate by nightmarish visions instead of simply growing sleepy. Other effects might include--Love potions, the target feels Love (or any other specified emotion) for the user, if Bashing damage goes to unconsciousness.

(\*\*\*) "Jekyll's Mask"--Requires access to chemicals and laboratory equipment. User can spend Misery and Willpower to concoct a potion/formula which will make facial appearance temporarily normal. No Twists can be used, no Misery spent while effect is in place or it will immediately dissipate. Reversion can be caused by any stressful situation which causes a failed Composure roll or anything that produces Misery.

(\*\*\*\*) "Kiss of the Borgia"--The user creates a potent supernatural chemical, as in "Pharmacist's Fingers", but this time injects it herself. By spending 1 Misery and 1 Willpower, the substance becomes dormant in the user's body. The user can release the drug at will, either through a kiss, by skin to skin contact, through blood or saliva ("the Cobra Spit"). This drug is supernatural in origin and does Aggravated damage to Supernaturals effected by it. Determine damage in the same way as with "Pharmacist's Fingers", only the effects are more potent. It does 2 Health Levels of Bashing per success if soporific, 1 Lethal or Aggravated if intended as poison. Other, more elaborate effects may include emotional controls, as above, or hallucinatory visions that can be triggered by a smell or sound. Or the target can be transformed into a bestial or deformed state that lasts until the drug dice pool fails to score a success. ("The Hyde Trip")

(\*\*\*\*\*) "Mad Gasser"--By using this Twist, a Hunchback can breathe in an effectively limitless quantity of gaseous compounds (anesthesia is a favorite, but tear gas or flammable Natural Gas or even more exotic formulas can be used). He can then breathe it back out, hours later if necessary. The most common use of this Twist is to breathe an anesthesia or other gaseous drug through a keyhole, or under a door, or possibly through a small gap in the window. Everyone inside the room must make a Stamina roll or immediately experience the full effect of the gas. If the initial roll is resisted, then a dice pool is rolled for the drug as per other Alchemie powers. This Twist can be used to deliver poisons that do Lethal damage, but no Aggravated damage can be done to Supernaturals by this means.

## Armadura

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(\*)"Unnatural Vigor"--The user can spend 1 Misery to acquire three additional Health Levels. These bonus levels last for 1 scene. Bashing damage taken to these levels disappears when the extra levels are lost. Lethal damage turns into Bashing damage and is moved down to normal Levels. Aggravated damage is not effected by this Twist and will transfer to normal Health Levels once the Twist's effect dissipates. This Twist can also be used to add dots in Armadura to any Stamina roll instead of adding bonus Health Levels.

(\*\*) "Thick-Skinned"--Dots in Armadura can be used as Armor for one scene, cost is 1 Misery.

(\*\*\*) "Shockproof"--User can spend 1 Misery to become immune to electrical shocks or concussive stunning of any kind. All action modifiers caused by Bashing damage taken can be ignored for an additional 1 Willpower. Falls only do Bashing damage.

(\*\*\*\*) "Rhino-Hide"--User becomes immune to all poisons. With 1 Willpower all action modifiers from Lethal wounds can be

ignored. Falls from any height do no damage. Vehicle collisions also cause no damage. Character only takes Bashing damage from exposure to fire or extreme heat. Cost: 1 Misery.

(\*\*\*\*\*)"Unbreakable"--As above, but all Lethal damage (from weapons etc.) becomes Bashing damage for the duration of the Twist. Costs 1 Misery per turn. Aggravated damage is unaffected.

## Betemismo

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(\*)"Brighteyes"--The user of this Twist acquires the enhanced senses of wild animals by spending 1 Misery. Dots in Betemismo are added to any dice pool for tracking or perception. The user automatically acquires full nightvision and the ability to determine identities solely by scent. The effects last for one scene and cause visible changes in the user (such as enlarged or cat-like eyes, long pointed ears, a animal-like muzzle/snout etc).

(\*\*) "Cry of the Wild"--The user can emit an animal-like howl or roar that causes any normal Mortals in earshot to make a Composure roll. Failure means that they retreat as fast as possible from the area, or barricade themselves inside any available shelter if retreat is not practical. Animals can either be automatically spooked by the sound, or drawn toward it, by the user's choice.

(\*\*\*) "Running Wild"--The user spends 1 Misery and acquires the ability to lope or run on all fours. Movement penalties are removed and base movement is doubled. The user can add Betemismo dots to any dice pool for running, climbing, or leaping while the Twist is active. Footing is automatically sound over broken terrain or other natural surfaces. But, a Dexterity roll must be made for every turn of movement over artificial surfaces such as floors or roads. Once activated, this Twist can be maintained by spending 1 Willpower per hour for extended chases.

(\*\*\*\*) "With Tooth & Claw"--The User can manifest animal-like fangs or claws by spending 1 Misery point. These natural weapons do Lethal damage, but do not cause Aggravated damage to Supernaturals. Once manifested, they last for 1 scene.

(\*\*\*\*\*)"The Fearful Symmetry"--The user's Misery allows him to transform into a bestial creature of fearsome aspect. All Physical attributes are at +2 while the Twist is in effect. The Hunchback bulks up and is covered with shaggy hair or fur. Claws and fangs grow in and his eyes become fierce and feral. The ultimate shape adopted with this power resembles a hunchbacked bear with a horrifying face (and not the Gauru form of the Uratha). While in this form, the user's fangs and claws will do Aggravated damage to other Supernaturals. The Beast-Shape can be maintained with by rolling dice equal in number to Hump rating. The Twist's effects vanish upon the first failed roll (though they last for at least one turn). Cost: 1 Misery and 1 Willpower to activate.

## Fantasmira

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(\*) "Tingler"--User can sense the presence of any other Supernatural entity or being by spending Misery and concentrating. Mental roll to narrow down where the direction to the target(s).

(\*\*) "Ghostsight"--Can see immaterial or invisible Supernaturals, entities, ghosts, spirits, Vampires or Werewolves using powers etc. Misery cost 2. Sight reveals ghostly white outline but not details or colors.

(\*\*\*) "Creeping Flesh"--once presence of a Supernatural is detected, user can spend 1 Misery to identify the type or creature or being present, as long as it is a type that has been previously encountered. Each type of Supernatural causes a specific variety of tingling, skin-prickling sensation.

(\*\*\*\*) "Crawling Eye"--Allows user to see Auras of all beings in sight or detect enchanted or spiritbound objects. Each Supernatural leaves a trail of coruscating light-prickles, much like eyes squeezed tightly shut phosphors. Once such a trail is discovered, the user of this Twist can close her own eyes and by making a successful Tracking roll, mind's eye will track down trail toward current location of target. Costs 1 Misery per turn to use.

(\*\*\*\*\*) "Urgemarks"--The goals, intentions, wants, needs, desires, fears, etc are visible as Port-Wine birthmark-like stains on the target's face. Flickers in auras are detectable as well. Mental roll to decipher the information visible.

## Gambolismo

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(\*) "Scrabble"--Dots in this Twist can be added to any climb or acrobatics roll. Add dots in Twist to base to determine movement.

### Cost: 1 Misery

(\*\*) "Clamber"--Allows user to climb any vertical or near vertical surface that has ANY handholds without making a roll. Sheer surfaces can be scaled with a normal Climb or Acrobatics roll.

(\*\*\*) "Caper"--Dots are added to all Dex dice pools for movement (jumping, climbing, balance, acrobatics etc.) Double normal movement rate and jumping distances. Allows wild gyrations and well, caperings on sloped or unstable surfaces at no penalty.

(\*\*\*\*) "Spider Crawl"--1 Misery and 1 Willpower to crawl across vertical surface, up walls, across ceilings etc. without any sort of roll. Willpower only needed to activate power, but Misery has to be spent for every turn of use.

(\*\*\*) "Springheels Jack"--With Misery expenditure (1 point per 10' distance to be covered), user can leap upwards or outwards tremendous distances. Over houses, across streets from rooftops etc. Can also be used to negate damage from falling if activated before jumping down.

## Institutionale

(\*)"You Are Here": The character automatically knows her location while in her home institution. She knows the way to every exit, room, etc in the building. No roll is needed. For 1 Misery this power can be used in any institutional building, even one the character has never been in before.

(\*\*) "Home Field Advantage": The character gains a +2 dice bonus to all dice pools while inside his home institution. For 1 Misery the character can invoke this power while inside another institution of the same type as his Sanctuaire (any hospital, or any church, or school etc. as long as it is the same type of institution as the character's home haven.) For 2 Misery a character can add 1 to his own dice pools and 1 to those of his fellow Lurchmates. The bonus lasts for 1 scene. Bonuses cannot be stacked for multiple characters possessing and attempting to use this Twist simultaneously. Only one bonus can be applied.

(\*\*\*) "The Walls Have Ears": The character is automatically aware of everything said or being done within her home building/institution. A simple Perception roll is needed to detect particular conversations or persons. For 1 Misery, this power can be used in another similar institutional building.

(\*\*\*\*) "Out of the Woodwork": For 1 Misery the character can locate and open "secret passages" or "hidden doors" within his home institution (whether or not such passages were originally constructed within the building.) These allow egress from any room and unobserved movement between any two locations inside the same building. Any character trying to pursue the user of this Twist makes an opposed Intelligence roll vs the Hunchback's Int + Institutionale. If the pursuer is successful, he may spend 1 Willpower to locate and use the same hidden doors and passages.

(\*\*\*\*\*)"The Shuttered Room":The Hunchback has found or created a secret room that does not appear on any maps or plans for the building and which cannot be found by any non-Supernatural means. Inside the character's home institution, this room is as large as an average bedroom. It is a comfortable lair with access to utilities most often from jury-rigged taps of wires or pipes inside the walls. This room is always in the same location relative to other rooms within the institution. For 1 Misery a character can find a temporary bolthole--a crawlspace, utility closet, steam tunnel, etc--which cannot be found by non-Supernatural means. A refuge found by using this power is only large enough to hide in. It is too cramped or uncomfortable to be used in any long-term manner. This refuge can only be located as long as the Hunchback is using it. Once exited it cannot be relocated without spending another point of Misery to find it once again. The character may choose to spend 1 Willpower per day to make the refuge permanent. For 2 Misery, a Hunchback using this power can discover such a bolthole while inside an institutional building of the same type as his own haven. Such out-of-haven boltholes can still be made permanent by spending the 1 Willpower cost. No full-sized room can be created or found using this power outside of the character's home haven.

## Masque

(\*)"Trustworthy Face"--User can show face only through window or door, spend Willpower to convince target on other side to trust face and open door, window, get into car, etc.

(\*\*) "Face in the Crowd"--A Hunchback using this Twist can effectively disappear into a crowd of people. Ideally, the user of the Twist should be wearing some sort of uniform or distinctive clothing that the bulk of the crowd is also wearing (labcoats or scrubs in a hospital, school colors at a game, etc. By spending 1 Misery, the user effectively vanishes. No amount of searching through the crowd will uncover him. Others in the crowd will not notice or react to the Hunchback as long as he does not act aggressively toward them. The user of the Twist can watch any pursuers from within the crowd with no fear of being noticed. He is effectively invisible. The effect is broken if the user leaves the crowd in any direction or if the crowd dissipates on its own.

(\*\*\*) "The Upright Man"--By spending 1 Misery, the Hunchback can temporarily assume a totally upright posture. The Hump does

not disappear, but loosens its grip on the spine enough to permit the character to stand straight. This Twist does not remove any obvious facial deformities. It costs 1 Willpower per turn to maintain this. Movement is not halved while this power is in effect, however, any vigorous action taken while this power is in effect requires a Composure roll to keep the effect in place.

(\*\*\*\*) "Just Like You"--Costs 1 Misery to activate. Allows the user to duplicate the appearance of another person, including being able to stand and walk as that person. All deformities are hidden from view, though a keen observer (Opposed roll) can detect subtle flaws in the appearance. It takes 1 Willpower per turn to maintain this disguise. Anyone viewing the user when the effect collapses will have to make an immediate Composure roll, with the attendant opportunity for the Hunchback to reap Misery.

(\*\*\*\*) "Mr. Smithers!"--When confronted with authorities, allows Hunchback to shed Hump and monstrous features, which slough off as mere mask & padding. The user appears to any Mortal viewer as a perfectly normal man/woman who was wearing a disguise. Supernaturals using Normal appearance last for 1 day (no Twists or Supernatural powers are at all possible during that time). After 1 Day, start rolling Hump dice pool. On first success (1 roll/day), the Hunchback reverts to monstrous appearance. Activating this power flushes out the entire Misery pool of the Hunchback. Misery has to be replaced upon effect's collapse. (First dose comes from User's own Composure roll upon reversion. Each FAILURE produces 2 Misery points as the agonizing return to hideousness wracks user's body and sanity.)

## Pathetique

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(\*) "Cringe"--by cringing down and spending Misery the user can prevent one opponent from striking or taking hostile action for 1 turn.

(\*\*) "Cower"--As above but effects all potentially hostile persons in immediate vicinity.

(\*\*\*) "Grovel"--As Cringe but not only stops attacks for 1 turn but causes Target to abandon all hostile actions in disgust or pity. Effect is broken if Hunchback makes any overtly hostile actions toward the target. For dedicated opponents, Dots in this Twist category + Hump vs. target's resistance stat. Blood Potency, Primal Urge, etc. is added to resistance for Supernaturals.

(\*\*\*\*) "Toady"--Stops hostile action by one target but will also change Hostile character to non-hostile or even friendly status. The user fawns and flatters the target while spending Misery points. Additional Willpower expenditure will make the effect permanent unless resisted. All effects last until further cause of possible hostility occurs. Always an opposed roll. Dots in Twist+Hump vs. target's resistance +BP,PU, etc. for Supernaturals.

(\*\*\*\*\*) "Wretched Creature"--Used against a crowd or group of targets. Success will turn all of them non-hostile and/or encourage them to depart vicinity. Effect lasts until further possible cause is given. Especially useful for halting and dispersing angry mobs bent on vigilante justice.

## Puissance

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(\*)"Club-Hand"--For 1 Misery, the user's hands turn hard, calloused and leathery. Bone projects to just under the surface. In hand to hand combat, use Brawling skill for rolls, but damage is inflicted as per use of a club. Blows with these fists cause Lethal damage. Misery has to be spent every turn to maintain the effect.

(\*\*) "Fingers of Iron"--User's fingers and hands acquire immense gripping strength. Grip on inanimate objects cannot be broken, short of sawing through fingers or wrists. When used on a living target, the target can make a contested STR roll to try to break the grip, but the gripping Hunchback can add dice equal to dots in Puissance Twist to dice pool. Non-Supernatural targets with STR lower than the Puissance level of the user simply cannot escape the grip. No roll is needed.

(\*\*\*) "Gorilla Press"--User can grab an opponent (successful HTH roll required) and lift them off the ground. User expends 1 Misery to activate and + 1 Willpower per round to maintain hold. Opponent grabbed and lifted off the ground cannot escape. No contested roll is possible. Without leverage, the held target can do nothing but writhe and flail helplessly. Supernatural powers that change the shape of the user can break the hold. Powers that cause damage to an enemy through contact still function. The Hunchback would take damage normally from such attacks, but the hold would not be broken unless the user of this Twist relented.

(\*\*\*\*) "The Huggy"--Allows user to grab and hold an opponent, lifting them off the ground and pressed against chest. Target is rendered incapable of escape as with "Gorilla Press", however, in addition to holding the target helpless--this Twist allows the Hunchback to squeeze opponent in a bear hug. STR+ Puissance roll minus target's STA (+ Resilience or any other Supernatural means of increasing resistance to injury). Successes equal damage done. Costs 1 Misery to activate and 1 Misery + 1 Willpower to maintain each turn.

(\*\*\*\*\*) "Brutalize"--Costs 1 Misery per turn to activate and maintain. Allows Hunchback to do Aggravated damage with fists or The Huggy. Puissance level is added to all STR related dice pools.

## Regale

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(\*) "Stage Presence"--By spending 1 Misery, a Hunchback can use her Social Attributes without penalty, as long as observers believe that the user is engaged in some form of entertainment presentation. (street miming, joke telling, actual stage performance, puppet shows, wandering "character" actor at amusement park, that sort of thing). By spending an additional 1 Willpower, the Hunchback can direct the use of this power at one specific target and retain the bonus for the next interaction with that target, even if "out of character" or away from performance.

(\*\*) "The Voice"--The user is able to deliver vocal renditions that profoundly move the audience. The Twist negates penalties to Social Attributes and adds +2 to any Dice Pool for performance related rolls. The Hunchback using this Twist may move her audience toward any one emotional response, and with an Opposed Manipulation + Expression vs Composure roll, any given member of the audience can be edged toward a specific response in the near future.

(\*\*\*) "Borsch Belter"--User targets a specific member of the audience and then heckles and verbally abuses him. Opposed Presence + Expression + Regale vs Composure roll. If target loses the contest, he suffers a penalty equal to the difference with the winning roll. This penalty is applied to all actions and Dice Pools for 1 scene. (the target is frothing with rage, trembling so much that he cannot hold a gun or weapon steady, or is so emotionally devastated by the humiliation that he can do little but hide his face and try to slink out of the audience.)

(\*\*\*\*) "Tears of the Clown"--By acting out a tragic tableau, or singing a sad lament, (Pre+Performance roll), and spending a point of Misery, the Hunchback can cause an entire roomful of people to become saddened and sympathetic toward the user. This power can be used on an entire audience, in which case it lasts for as many turns as the Successes generated by the dice pool. In this case, the audience is swayed by the sadness of the Hunchback and any person trying to attack the user will be treated as a heartless, vile criminal. Just vocally criticizing or mocking, or threatening the Hunchback using this power will draw boos and hisses from the affected audience. If the power is focussed on one particular target person, that person will feel the effects for a number of days equal to the successes generated. The Hunchback will benefit from a +1 to Social Actions with that one person, provided that the Actions can be tied in some way to sympathy, compassion or sorrow. Each time such a bonus is used, the target gets a Resolve+Composure roll. The first time that roll fails, the power's effects dissipate. The target's sympathy has been overwhelmed by the sheer ugliness or manipulative smarminess of the user. The user of the Twist does not gain any Misery from this failed roll.

(\*\*\*\*\*) "Encore"--The greatest of the Regale abilities, this allows the Hunchback to perform in front of an audience (Pre+Performance) and use the Successes generated at some later time. These Successes can be held for a number of days equal to the character's Hump rating. These Successes, however, cannot be used with another public performance. They must be used in individual or small group interactions instead.

## Surnaturelisme



(\*)"Needful Things"--The Hunchback knows, instinctively, what her Supernatural companions or Masters crave. Blood for the Vampire, Essence for the Werewolf and the Mage, or Spirit. Moreover, the Hunchback can, with a simple Perception roll (Wits + Composure) determine where the nearest source of what the Supernatural needs can be found.

(\*\*) "Faithful Vessel"--This power allows the Hunchback to take into himself anything that his Supernatural Master or Companion needs, and transport it to them without damaging or diminishing the potency of the Needful Thing. The Hunchback can drink blood and regurgitate Blood Points back for the Vampire. Essence is eaten, either through flesh or by breathing it in from a Loci and regurgitated for the Werewolf, Mage or Spirit (Ridden or simply Manifested). There is no way to get around the disgusting regurgitation factor. The Supernatural must feed from the lips of the Hunchback as he coughs up the Needful Thing. Very few can bear to lower themselves to such a disgusting act except in extreme need. Taking in the Needful Thing requires a Resolve + Composure -the Hunchback's Hump roll. At least one success is required to take in the Vitae or Essence. Failures and Botch's produce Misery for the Hunchback.

(\*\*\*) "Shortcut"--The Hunchback is able to Step Sideways through the Gauntlet and travel through the Spirit World. Resolve+Composure+Hump modified by the regional Gauntlet level is required to travel into the Spirit World. Physical obstructions can be ignored or passed through using this Twist, but Magickal Wards or other Supernatural powers can block passage. Cost: 1 Misery

(\*\*\*\*) "Echo of the Master"--By this level, the Hunchback has become so attuned to the nature of the Supernaturals around her, that she can manifest one of the powers granted by the Supernatural's Disciplines, Gifts, Spheres or Numina. Activation rolls and usage rolls are as written for the power being mimicked. Cost in Blood Points or Essence are met by spending equivalent amounts of Misery. The Hunchback's Hump rating equals the highest level of a power that can be mimicked. (A Hunchback with a Hump of 3 could mimick up to the third dot in any Discipline, or up to a third level Gift, Rite or Rote.) When mimicking a Mage's spells, the Hunchback does not need to actually have any of the required Spheres. Rather, the user's Hump rating substitutes for the level of Spheres required for the power.

(\*\*\*\*\*) "Becoming"--The pinnacle of Surnaturelisme allows the Hunchback to actually BECOME a Supernatural of the type she has been serving. The Hunchback spends Misery equal to the Blood Potency, Primal Urge, or Avatar (?) of their Supernatural Master and physically becomes a similar Supernatural with 1 pt. of Blood Potency, Primal Urge etc. The user of this power uses Blood Points, Essence etc., all of which have to be acquired through the methods normally used by such Supernaturals to power Disciplines or effects. The Hunchback acquires all the needs, weaknesses and advantages of the Supernatural type being mimicked. Any Supernatural test or scrutiny of the Hunchback using this power will reveal only that they appear to be of the type (right down to Clan & Bloodline, Tribe & Lodge, etc) of the Master. There is a terrible price to pay for even this limited sort of freedom. The Hunchback must spend 1 Willpower plus 1 Misery plus 1 BP, Essence etc. every night to maintain the guise. A roll of Resolve + Composure must be made to hold the shape. When the power does fail and the Hunchback reverts to her original status, use of this power will cost another dose of Willpower points equal to the number of nights spent as a different kind of Supernatural (reflecting the horror and grief of falling back under the sway of The Curse after a brief time of freedom.).

## Vilainize



(\*)"The Ugly Face"--The Hunchback reveals his nightmarish visage and spends 1 Misery point. Viewers are forced to check Composure minus the user's Hump Rating or cringe away in fear. The Hunchback does not reap Misery from failed Composure checks. The sudden shock of horror will stun a character for one turn and give the Hunchback automatic Initiative on the next turn.

(\*\*) "Stenche"--The Hunchback is able to produce or carry an odor so vile that others must make a physical check to keep from retching and a Composure check to avoid immediately moving away from the user. If either fail, the target(s) will not be able to take any actions during the current turn and will be Stunned the next turn as well. Cost: 2 Misery

(\*\*\*) "Creeper"--With subtle lurking and shadowplay, the Hunchback can cause all persons inside a target area (normally an Old Dark House or similar building. Larger buildings cannot be effected in their entirety, but a given wing or floor could be effected) experience growing sensations of dread. Any sudden appearance or noise causes a Fear check/Composure roll. Failed rolls can result in allies attacking each other, wasteful expenditure of ammunition, disrupted Discipline/Gift/Spell effects etc. Cost: 1 Misery for every person to be effected in target area. And 1 Willpower per turn to maintain.

(\*\*\*\*) "Ugly Stick"--Requires a wooden cudgel of some kind. Target must be struck with the club in combat. Any wound level of damage causes the Target's face to appear hideously deformed. The duration of the deformation equals the time it would take to heal the type of wounds suffered (Bashing or Lethal). Use of Disciplines or other Supernatural abilities will speed recovery of features.

(\*\*\*\*\*)"Ugly as Sin"--Causes anyone in a target area around the user, not exceeding 10 feet per dot in this category of Twist, to manifest malformed or monstrous features that reflect their "Inner Evil". (Number or severity of distorted features determined by 10 minus target's current Morality.) Cost: 1 Misery per person in effected area. Duration equals the severity as determined above in turns.

## **Wildeweise**

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(\*)"Wild Man"--The Hunchback is as comfortable in the wilderness as any animal. He does not suffer from exposure and can find comfortable shelter or sufficient food for one day either with a Wits+Survival roll (only one Success needed) or by simply spending a point of Willpower.

(\*\*) "Doolittling"--By spending a point of Misery, the Hunchback can communicate with any wild creature or animal within earshot. The character cannot give commands, but can ask questions, as long as they are very simple ones.

(\*\*\*) "Among the Beasts"--Wild animals accept the Hunchback as a normal and non-threatening part of their environment. They will not attack or flee from the user unless provocative action is taken. This power can be used to make a Social roll (skills and attributes involved depending on situation) to calm domestic animals, even police or guard dogs. This power only costs 1 pt. of Misery to activate if the character has never encountered the animals in this specific area before. If he is in his normal territory, it can be assumed that all of the local wildlife have already become innured to his presence among them. Predators will share their prey as if the character were one of the pack or flock or other relevant grouping.

(\*\*\*\*) "Leader of the Pack"--The Hunchback can take over a group of animals, be they wolves, dogs, deer or other beasts, and act as their leader. Animals will obey simple directions from the user of this power. One point of Misery must be spent only if the user is commanding the animals under his power to attack or confront opponents that they would normally flee. (IE: Just about any human or Supernatural)

(\*\*\*\*\*)"King of the Jungle"--The Hunchback has become the undisputed ruler of a particular patch of wilderness. He automatically knows if any outsider enters the territory or harms any creature therein. Animals will greet him with affection and obey him with unwavering loyalty. Thorns and vines will not impede his passage. Trees will shelter and hide him from pursuers (Stealth roll automatically successful unless Supernatural powers are being used to search.) The character need not roll or be concerned about survival or food in his claimed territory.

## Systems

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### Character Generation

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The initial step in creating a Hunchback character is the same as in all NWOD games. Generate a basic human character using the World of Darkness core book's rules. The Hunchback Template: Choose Marque. Add Attribute bonuses and one dot in the Signature Twist for that Marque.

Carabeau: +1 Intelligence & +1 to either Presence or Manipulation. Signature Twist is Masque.

Feraleur: +1 Stamina & +1 to either Dexterity or Wits. Signature Twist is Betemismo.

Malvisagi: +1 Dexterity & +1 to either Wits or Stamina. Signature Twist is Vilainize.

Oublieur: +1 Resolve & +1 to either Intelligence or Manipulation. Signature Twist is Fantasmira.

Punchello: +1 to Presence & +1 to either Intelligence or Dexterity. Signature Twist is Regale.

Choose a Sanctuaire and add one dot in the Signature Twist for that Sanctuaire.

Concordian: Institutionale

Mabuse: Alchemie

Mondelora: Pathetique

Outrevie: Surnaturelisme

Savagine: Wildeweise

Abandonnai: Puissance

Add two more dots in any Twist, either increasing the two already acquired or in any other Twist excluding only those that are associated with specific Rues. Only members of that Rue can acquire those Twists.

Backgrounds: At least one dot must be spent in both Master and Tragic Love. (Exception: Abandonnai do not, can not, have any dots in Master.)

The cost to increase Hump is the same as increasing Blood Potency in V:TR or Harmony in W:TF etc.

A minimum of two dots in Hump is required to join any of the Rues. Most Rues can be joined later in the character's development. (Exception: The Rue de Infante must be selected at character generation. At the Story Teller's option, a player may accept a "negative" experience point score to pay for increased Hump in order to play a Rue de Infante character. If so, no Experience Points can be spent for anything else until the negative "debt" is paid off.)

Starting Misery is 10 minus Composure.

Starting Humanity is 7.

Editable Character sheet, designed by Mr. Gone! [1]

### Misery & Hump

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Hunchbacks need Misery to power their Twists. Misery is more than simple grief or suffering. It is the inescapable sense that one cannot be a part of society, that no matter what good things you do, no matter how hard you try, ultimately normal humans will only see The Hump and The Curse. The Miserable are damned while living.

Whenever a Hunchback goes out among Mortals, there are countless opportunities for collecting Misery. Just passing through a crowd without being disguised beneath bundles of clothing will cause onlookers to gasp and point and shy away. Such reactions hurt, but they don't normally produce Misery.

When a Hunchback tries to interact with a normal Mortal, the Mortal must make a Composure roll. If the roll is a success, the Mortal can contain their revulsion and fear enough to carry out the interaction with strained good grace. But even in most of these cases, the fact that the Mortal is straining can be detected. They won't make eye contact. They develop little facial ticks. They sweat. They stammer over their words. Their faces contort with a barely contained expression of horror. Such things are easily detectable by Hunchbacks.

If the Mortal fails their Composure roll completely, they will shrink away from the Hunchback and try to get as far away as possible. If the roll is a Dramatic Failure, they will become hostile and attack, striking out even if there was nothing threatening about the attempted interaction.

Every die from a Composure roll that is not a success, adds 1 Misery to the Hunchback's Misery Pool.

A Hunchback may safely absorb as much Misery as they have in their Hump rating. Misery in excess of that will force the Hunchback to make either a Composure roll or a Resolve roll (Hunchback's choice). Failure will result in a temporary Depression Dementation. This lasts until the Hunchback can gain Willpower through some form of service or by acting upon his Virtues or Vices. (only the first such penalty takes effect. A Hunchback who is already Depressed doesn't become more depressed with consecutive failures. It's an either or condition.)

If the Hunchback suffers a Dramatic Failure, he will go into a Murder Frenzy, attacking and attempting to kill the cause of his humiliation and pain.

EXAMPLE: A Hunchback with a Hump rating of "1" tries to speak with a passer-by on the street. The perfectly normal Mortal makes a Composure Roll with 2 dice (Composure of "2"). This can result in a maximum of 2 points of Misery if the roll is a complete failure. The Hunchback can only absorb 1 Misery at a time, so he will have to make a Resolve or Composure roll to deal with the sudden shriek and cries of "Dear God in Heaven! What is THAT!". If that roll fails, the Hunchback becomes Depressed. If that roll is a Dramatic Failure, the passer-by is in for a Murder Frenzy beatdown.

While in Metagame contexts, the character is attempting social encounters specifically to add points to his Misery Pool so that he can use some cool Twists in the upcoming conflict scene, the In Character motivation would be more along the lines of the Hunchback being anxious about upcoming conflicts and trying, pathetically, to make friends in the meantime. Hunchbacks have a doomed love of Humanity and feel starved for affection, or even just simple acceptance. That they are endlessly battered by rejection and Misery no more stops their efforts than the unseemly taste of blood will stop a Vampire from feeding.

In their hearts, every Hunchback is an optimist, forever believing in the possibility of love and affection from others.

In reality, The Curse has made them into emotional Masochists who seek out and crave their own humiliation and grief.



## The Master

The Master of a Hunchback is a Patron/Mentor Background rated from 1-5. The rating of a Master can indicate how powerful and influential that person is in the area, or it can indicate the degree of affection and approval the Master shows to his Hunchback Minion.

A Master rated at one dot could be an ordinary citizen with little clout socially who is working on a Weird Science project in his garage. Or, it could be taken to indicate that the power-mad Vampire Prince whom the Hunchback serves cares little for his

minion and will barely lift a finger to help him if something goes wrong. This allows two or more Hunchbacks to serve the same Master, but all have different ratings in the Master background. Masters often play favorites.

The Master is useful in a variety of ways. First off, if the Hunchback has gotten into trouble with the Law or other authorities, a "Master Roll"--dice pool equal to the rating of the Master--can be made to see if the Master can deflect or defuse the situation. (again, anything from hiding his minion in the garage and stammering to the cop that he hasn't seen any "suspicious looking persons" shambling around the neighborhood OR the annoyed Prince throws some Majesty down on the angry mob and convinces them that it would be a good thing to drop the torches and go immediately home.)

A Hunchback working on an errand or mission for her Master can choose one time during that errand to add the Master rating in dice to any one dice pool (reflecting the increased determination and focus of a Hunchback acting in the name of her Master).

When a Hunchback comes back from such an errand, it is judged either a "success" or a "failure". Either way, the Master makes a Composure roll. The Hunchback receives 2 Willpower points for every success on that roll and 1 Misery from every failure. If the roll is a Dramatic Failure, the Master is either so enraged by his idiot servant's screw-ups that he beats or whips his servant mercilessly. STR roll minus Hunchback's Defense. Damage determined as per normal for attack type. Any damage resulting is Aggravated and must be healed naturally. If the mission was a "Success" but the Composure roll was a Dramatic Failure, there was possibly some component or condition on the mission that the Hunchback failed to remember while carrying it out, or the Hunchback interrupted the Master at a particularly bad time. Same result as above, but the damage will be normal Bashing or Lethal and not Aggravated.

Whenever a Hunchback has to make a Resolve or Composure roll to deal with soaking in more Misery than his Hump rating, he can add dice equal to the Master Roll to his dice pool. This reflects the added confidence and restraint that having a Master gives a Hunchback.

## Willpower

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## Humanity

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## Rues

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## Ataudine

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(ah-tod-in-Nay) Assassins. Trained professional killers. Mentor/Patron looks for such characters and adopts them into the Guild or Brotherhood. They already are filled with bitterness and hate for normals, so they can be easily turned into assassins for hire. Stealth and weapon skills. Deadly strike. Poison knowledge. Etc. "They're like NINJAS, only uglier!" Contracts are supernaturally binding and each one adds bonuses equal to either the Status of the target or the Resources of the contractor (which ever is higher) to any one action per session that is crucial to carry out the job, at cost of obsessive dedication to the hunt. Once assigned a target, the Hunchback cannot gain Willpower from any action that is not directly related to the hunt/contract. More seriously, the Ataudine Hunchback cannot spend Willpower for any purpose not directly related to the hunt. Tragic Love may be a target they've been contracted to kill or a witness or often a medical worker encountered as a consequence of carrying out jobs.

## Homocidio

(\*)"Marked for Death"--Once an Ataudine assassin has been assigned to a kill, she will be able to recognize and locate her target automatically. Only a single success on a simple Perception roll is required to spot the target in a crowd or to unerringly zero in on the location of the target.

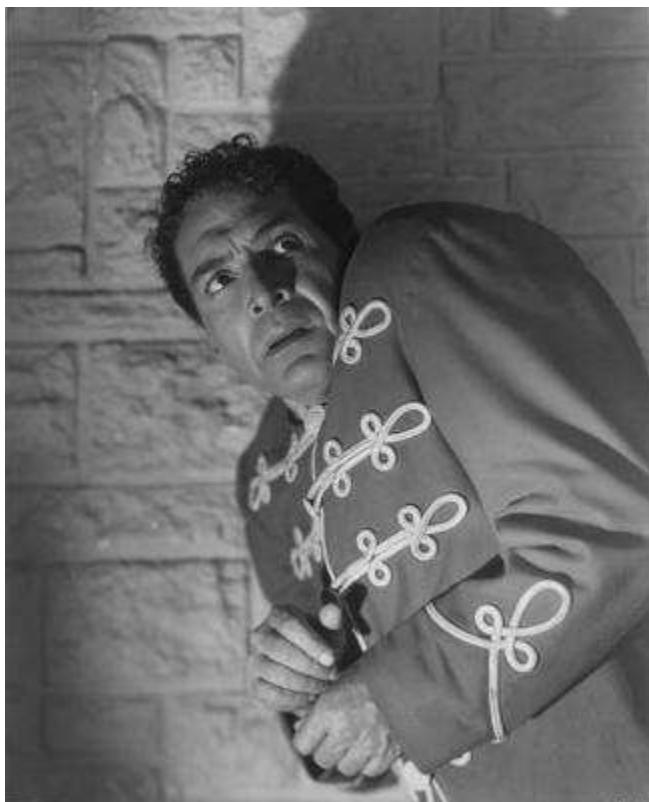
(\*\*) "Unerring Aim"--By spending 1 Misery, the Hunchback acquires significant bonuses toward striking a target with any kind of missile or thrown weapon. There are no range penalties for any such attack up to the outer limit of the weapon's range. The target cannot make an active dodge without succeeding in an opposed Resolve roll with the assassin. The target's Defense Bonus is not subtracted from the to hit roll. When added in with their contract bonuses this makes the Ataudine insanely dangerous antagonists.

(\*\*\*) "Personal Poisons"--The Hunchback is able to brew up a toxin specifically designed to effect only the target. The substance is inert to all other individuals. It can be poured into drinks that are shared by a number of people, but will only effect the target. It can be smeared onto any item as a contact poison, again, harmless to anyone but the target. This power costs 1 Misery to activate. An Intelligence + Homicidio roll is made (possibly with a Contract Bonus). The resulting Poison has an intensity equal to the number of successes in that roll. The poison always does Lethal damage to its target. Ataudine do not waste time capturing or incapacitating targets. They are killers, pure and simple. The poison created with this Twist can be made to cause Aggravated damage to a Supernatural target, but the cost to activate the Twist is increased to 2 Misery and the resulting poison has an intensity of half (rounded down) the normal result.

(\*\*\*\*) "The Wicked Blade"--For 1 Misery, the Hunchback can roll a number of dice equal to her rank in Homocidio. For each resulting success, she gains an additional Melee attack for the round, with no multiple action penalties. This additional attacks can only be against the contracted target. The Hunchback cannot split attacks or attack any other target during the round that this Twist is in effect. The target may Dodge as normal against that many attacks, and his Defensive Bonus is in effect for each attack.

(\*\*\*\*) "Snicker-Snack"--For 1 Misery, the Hunchback is able to do Aggravated damage with one Melee weapon. This Twist cannot be used in combination with any of the other Homocidio powers.

## Barnumene



Carnival workers, they work in sideshows, but can count the carnies around them as friends who are unbothered by their appearance. Sideshow carnies. Works with a carnival freak show as one of the attractions. Patron is usually manager/owner of carnival. Can use social traits normally among other carnie folk. They're used to the unusual and are not shocked by

appearances. Tragic Love may be another performer (preferably one that is attractive and unobtainable) or a carnival visitor.

## Humbuggery

(\*) "Dramatic Entrance"—focuses all attention on the user, allowing any allies or compatriots in the room to act unseen. (pickpocketing etc.) Requires a Cha + Performance roll. Cost 1 Willpower.

(\*\*) "Shocker"—uses a sudden reveal to stun and terrify a target group for one turn. Requires a Performance roll. Cost 1 Misery.

(\*\*\*) "Show Stopper"—intercepts and interrupts the actions of others. Requires some feat such as juggling, firebreathing, acrobatics or oratory to attract attention. (successful Skill roll required).

(\*\*\*\*) "One Born Every Minute" Can make an outrageous lie sound believable. Opposed rolls, resisted by Mental attributes.

(\*\*\*\*\*)"Hey Rube!" On carnival or circus grounds, spend a Willpower point and a Misery point to summon all workers or performers within earshot. All available Carnies will come to the assistance of their comrade, fanatically attacking even a Supernatural. They become immune to Lunacy or other such effects.

Ritual: "The Great Unknown"--two or more Barnumene working together can cause hostile persons, Mortal or Supernatural, to promptly leave the carnival/circus grounds. They chase illusionary images or stumble through doors that transport them outside the grounds (regardless of where the door normally leads).

## Bruno

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This is an Anarchist biker gang of Abandonnai, the Hunchback equivalent to the Brujo. They are fast, strong, resilient, but not very bright.

Hunchpunks, they are black leather jacket wearing anarchists without traditional Masters. In a fashion similar to the Concordians, The Gang functions as their "Master". Being nomadic Biker gang types, they are never in one place long enough to develop a proper Tragic Love. Sometimes one may form a temporary fixation on a waitress or mechanic or other person they come in contact with, but these are very brief Tragic Loves--the tragedy being that the Bruno Hunchback will be moving on with his comrades in the not too distant future. Most Bruno settle for indulging their Vices as a means to restore Willpower. The Gang reaps Misery by terrifying locals. The mechanics are the same as for Abandonnai, an Intimidation roll is made--requiring just one Success. The persons being intimidated roll Composure. Every failure on that roll grants the Hunchback 1 Misery. Though they ride in groups, each Bruno must select a single victim to be terrorized for Misery. They cannot share a victim as a source of Misery. The activities of the Bruno will almost always result in local law enforcement agencies mobilizing against them. They tend to hit a town and roll on out in a single night.

## Road Rulz

(\*)"Road Rash"—damage from vehicular collisions or accidents does only Bashing damage. No roll or Misery expenditure is necessary. This power is always in effect for a Bruno.

(\*\*) "Rough Rider"--By spending a point of Misery and making a successful Drive roll, a Bruno can ride his bike up stairs, across grass, through gravel, over ice, through flimsy obstacles like folding chairs...or people, at full normal speed. There are no Penalties to the Drive roll once this power has been activated.

(\*\*\*) "Hit and Run"--By spending a point of Misery, a Bruno can make a full move (on foot or bike) after a successful attack. The Hunchback's departure is covered by a cloud of dust, or smoke, or other visual obstructions. Would be pursuers must make a contested Perception vs. the Hunchback's Manipulation + dots in Road Rulz to determine which way the attacker went.

(\*\*\*\*) "Hi Ho Silver!"—can call their riderless bikes to them with a whistle. This costs 1 Misery and 1 pt of Willpower. The range of the power is dots in Road Rulz miles. Regardless of the distance to be travelled, the bike will arrive the next turn.

(\*\*\*\*\*)"Helmet Law"—Cannot be killed by decapitation while wearing symbolic head gear. By spending 2 pts of Misery the Bruno can cut his own head, or have a comrade perform that duty, without taking more than a single level of Bashing damage. The severed head can still direct body as long as it is in sight range. Reconnection can be achieved with by spending a Misery point. Used for ghastly special attacks in which severed head is thrown at target as a projectile weapon, screaming all the way. Doubles fear-Misery point harvest. Power is negated if the helmet is removed from the head. In such a case, the Hunchback will become Incapacitated and collapse, remaining in a death-like state until the head is placed back in its place--which causes immediate reconnection and a return to previous Health Level. If a Hunchback does not have sufficient Misery to achieve reconnection, he

dies.

## Cyrano

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Use "Cryptovocce" abilities to interact with the public or their Tragic Loves through an intermediary or pawn. Good social traits which they can use normally through an intermediary dupe or pawn., but not directly. Singer, radio personality, recording artist etc. Patron is usually a manager or director. Tragic Loves tend to be other performers or sometimes a fan.

### Cryptovocce

(\*)"Coach"--can brief pawn on desired actions, which are to be carried out to the letter.

(\*\*)Stage Whisper"--communicate with pawn over some distance with a silent whisper—gives minute by minute instructions.

(\*\*\*)"Ventriloquist"--can throw voice so it appears to be coming from pawn's mouth.

(\*\*\*\*)"Puppet Show"--The user can control the actions of a minion or pawn at a distance. The use is automatically successful if the pawn is voluntarily allowing the control. It's a resisted roll otherwise. The Puppet uses her own Attributes, but the controller's Skills for determining Dice Pools.

(\*\*\*\*\*)"The Show Must Go On"--Allows the user to take over another's body while his own is incapacitated or worse. Resisted roll in all instances. If the user's body is destroyed while he is occupying another's body, the host body will undergo The Warping after a number of days equal to the Host's Charisma. The original personality is never actually destroyed, but rather becomes a dormant, unwilling passenger or spectator inside her own body. The original personality can temporarily take over if a contest of Resolves.

## Enfantes

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These Hunchbacks are Monster Children who have spent most of their lives locked in attics, basements or other rooms. Their Patrons are their parent(s) who live in fear of the monstrous "Child" that is their offspring. Masters are obsessive & domineering parents who control their grotesque Child by force of will and threats of punishment. An Enfante can have one member of her family as a "Master", others can be Patrons or Allies, etc. All members of this Rue have the Child quality, regardless of actual age, but are usually physically huge and powerful for their true age. Enfantes cannot have an Intelligence higher than 2, most are have only a 1. They get a bonus however, any points not spent on Mental Attributes may be added to either Strength or Stamina. Enfantes rarely stray far from home. Most have a set curfew, or must be back in their homes before their parents wake. An Enfante Hunchback must make a Resolve roll ever hour that they are out past their normal limits. Any failed roll results in the Hunchback abandoning whatever other activity they might be engaged in and rushing back to their homes. All Enfantes have "Haven" at a minimum of 1 dot.

### Rompus

(\*)"Invisible Friend"--The Enfante can make herself unseen and unheard except for a child companion or designated target. The invisibility lasts for one scene and costs 1 Misery. The power is negated if the Hunchback makes any sort of attack. Property destruction will always be blamed on the one person who can see the Enfante.

(\*\*)Caterwaul"--The Enfante's horrific screams can deafen and stun opponents. The Hunchback makes a normal attack using Strength + dots in Rompus. If successful, this attack does no actual damage, but the target is Stunned for the remainder of the round and cannot take any action. This Stunning effect lasts into the next round, giving the Hunchback automatic Initiative for the following round. Cost is 1 Misery.

(\*\*\*)"Romper Stomper"--The Enfante makes a shove attack, contested roll Str vs Str, against an opponent. If successful, the Hunchback can make another immediate attack rolling Str + dots in Rompus. The target's Defensive Bonus is not subtracted from this attack. Cost 1 Misery.

(\*\*\*\*)"Playmate"--This power forces a target to participate in the Enfante's games. The victim must take any role demanded for the game. The victim can even be made to dress up in embarrassing ways. This power costs 1 Misery and 1 Willpower to activate. The victim is allowed a Resolve roll vs. the Enfante's dots in Rompus to try to break out of character. Otherwise, until he or she is attacked or otherwise released from the game, the target is trapped in the designated role.

(\*\*\*\*\*)"Toybox"--This power allows the Enfante to animate nearby toys, turning them into living servants. Such constructs have Physical/Mental/Social Attributes equal to the Hunchback's Hump rating. Each construct has five Health levels, but suffers no wound penalties. The animation lasts for a number of days equal to the Hunchback's Hump rating, or until they are destroyed.

## Guignol

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These demented creatures who seek to emulate the Kindred that they serve. They think that by drinking mortal blood, they might someday become vampires themselves! The Kindred find them "very amusing, if messy." A Hunchback of the Rue de Guignol has a "Blood Pool" of sorts. They can feed this by drinking preserved blood, human or animal, or by drinking from a live victim. The latter is made more difficult because these Hunchbacks do not possess the soporific qualities of the Kindred's bite. They must immobilize their prey and hold them throughout the "feeding". Rue de Guignol Hunchbacks all suffer from a Derangement that they need blood to survive. They will become weakened and depressed if they do not ingest at least 1 point of blood per night. The Blood Point limit of the Blood Pool of the Guignol Hunchback is equal to 3 plus the Hunchback's Hump rating. The Hump allows them to drink and store blood, pumping it up into the thick blood vessels that wind through the bone and flesh of the Hump. Their use of this blood is not as "refined" as that practiced by the Kindred. The powers granted to them through the use of blood have developed into the Twist of Hematropics. To learn Hematropics, a Hunchback must not only have learned the techniques from a Rue de Guignol teacher, but he must also have tasted Vampiric vitae at least once prior to attempting to master the first Hematropic power. Due to this restriction, almost all Rue de Guignol Hunchbacks are of the Outrevie Sanctuaire. Those who serve Masters other than the Vampires must have some very close ties to the local Kindred, at least one dot in Ally: Kindred.

## Hematropics

(\*)"The Red Mask"--The Guignol Hunchback concentrates for one round, forcing 1 pt of blood from her Blood Pool up into her face, which becomes red and distorted. When the power is fully activated, blood streams out through small cuts along the brow and runs over the face, turning it into a bloody red mess. The result is both frightening and repulsive. Anyone viewing the Hunchback using this power must make a Composure or Resolve roll to hold their ground. Even if they can manage to stand up to the Red Masked Hunchback, their attacks suffer a -2 Penalty due to their involuntary reluctance to touch or even be near the Hunchback. This power lasts for one scene and costs 1 Misery and 1 Blood Point.

(\*\*) "Arterial Spray"--Once activated, any attack that would normally do Lethal damage, even ones that only do Bashing to Hunchbacks, results in a geyser of blood that erupts from the wound. The Attacker must make a Dex or Dodge roll to avoid being blinded by the spray. If they are not successful, the Attacker is blinded the next turn, forfeiting initiative and Defense Bonuses for one round and suffering a -4 penalty to attacks. Other onlookers must make Resolve or Composure rolls to avoid fleeing the ghastly sight. Cost 1 Misery to activate for a scene and 1 Blood Point for each new wound that sprays.

(\*\*\*)"Red Spew"--The Hunchback can vomit up and spit a stream of blood at an opponent up to Hump yards away. The stream of blood will blind those that are hit by it (normal Ranged attack), causing them to lose initiative and Defense Bonuses for the next round and a -4 Penalty to attacks. Additionally, the spew will make interior floors slick, requiring a Dex roll vs the Hunchback's dots in Hematropics for all who attempt to cross it, otherwise they fall and start the next round prone. Once down, an opponent must succeed in the Dex vs Hematropics roll to regain their footing. The slick lasts for 1 scene. Cost 1 Misery and 2 Blood Points.

(\*\*\*\*)"Blood Rain"--When this power is activated blood squirts out of the Hunchback's pores and orifices, as if under great pressure. The spray fans out in a circle around the Hunchback, effecting all within its range (Hump rating in yards). The fine mist of blood makes it hard to target the Hunchback, adding a Defense Bonus equal to the Hunchback's Blood Pool. This power fully drains the user's Blood Pool and lasts for a number of turns equal to the Blood Points available when it was activated. No other Hematropics power can be used while the Blood Rain is in effect. After the first round, any surface under the spray will become slick, requiring Dex Rolls as per those described for Red Spew above. A Hunchback using this power must have at least 3 Blood Points available when it is activated. Cost 1 Misery, empties Blood Pool.

(\*\*\*\*\*)"The Chopsies"--This power costs 5 Blood Points and 2 Misery to activate. The results are gruesome in the extreme. Once activated the user takes one level of Lethal damage immediately. The Hunchback's body then sloughs apart, limbs falling off, torso opening and sliding apart in chunks, head dropping from the neck, etc. Each separate piece is still alive and is capable of independent movement and attack. All attacks by such pieces are considered one combined attack with 5 dice. Hands grip, teeth bite, chunks of flesh and organs slither up over the opponents body, smothering those who breathe, burning the flesh with digestive juices. It's a horrible sight. All who see this power in use must make a Resolve or Composure roll to keep from fleeing in disgust and horror. This power is also useful for convincing an opponent that the user has been killed. The user makes a Stealth roll versus any observer's Perception to successfully look quite completely dead. The parts of the user's body can be brought together and reassembled extremely quickly. After one Round, the body can be back in its complete form, which allows opportunities for Ambush attacks and other surprises. Reassembling the body costs 1 Misery.

## Moreau

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Followers of the Rue de Moreau are exclusively Feraleur who have turned to Science for help. They all seek the Mabuse Sanctuaire by definition. If Dr. Moreau could turn beasts into men, surely there is hope for the Hunchbacks who are already human! The Rue de Moreau use excruciating surgical rituals and rites of bodily mortification to control their bestial traits. No anaesthesia can be used for any of these rituals, so the experience is unimaginably painful. Each rank's worth of modification requires a Humanity roll with Derangements and additional bestial features possibly resulting from failure. Additionally, many use tattoos and piercings to signify their rise through the painful levels of their Rue. Any Rue de Moreau Hunchback can read the rank of another by their markings. Each rank along the Rue de Moreau requires a surgical ritual that lasts as long as the subject's Hump rating in hours. These rituals are usually conducted by senior members of the Rue, making this Rue one of the few that requires Hunchbacks to live and work together in Lurches made up of at least pairs, and usually up to six or more. Masters with surgical expertise and at least a 3 in Occult can conduct the rituals in place of a senior Moreau Hunchback. Each level of the Anthromorphics Twist acquired is constantly in effect, though Misery or Willpower may have to be spent to prevent a sudden regression.

All Rue de Moreau Hunchbacks have 1 permanent level of Bashing damage for every two dots of Anthromorphics, (round down) reflecting the constant pain that they experience. They conduct daily rituals and procedures to maintain their progress on the road to normalcy. These take at least one hour per day to perform. Should a Rue de Moreau Hunchback not be able to practice these procedures, the Bashing levels will heal. Without those levels of Bashing damage, a Hunchback is unable to practice any of the powers of the Rue's Twist.

## Anthromorphics

(\*)"Urban Jungle"--The Feraleur becomes familiar with and eventually comfortable with the trappings of Civilization. He no longer suffers a -1 Penalty to all dice pools while out of wild settings. He can designate a room within a house, or a hotel, or any other safe enclosed area as his "lair" for purposes of rest and recovery. This rank costs 2 Willpower per day to maintain. Any sudden shock or injury requires a Composure roll to maintain the rank. If unsuccessful, the Hunchback acquires Misery equal to the number of failed dice rolls and temporarily reverts to a scared animal mode (regains the -1 Penalty). An additional point of Willpower can be spent to keep this regression temporary. On a Botched roll, this Rank of Anthromorphics is lost and the training must begin again to reacquire it.

(\*\*) "Are We not Men?"--To attain this level the Hunchback undergoes surgical rituals involving the breaking and reknitting of bones. When complete, the Hunchback can stand upright and walk without the halved movement penalty that Hunchbacks normally suffer. Any deformities and the Hump are still readily visible, but all limbs and the spine are straightened and held in vice-like braces until they set properly. The Feraleur's bestial traits are still present and visible, despite the upright posture. This rank requires 1 Willpower per day to maintain. Whenever violent action is taken, or emotional extremes are experienced, the Hunchback must make a Resolve roll. If successful, there are no consequences. If it fails, the Hunchback must spend 1 Misery to maintain the upright stance. If the roll is Botched, the Hunchback reverts to his former posture and must go through the ritual surgery again to regain this rank.

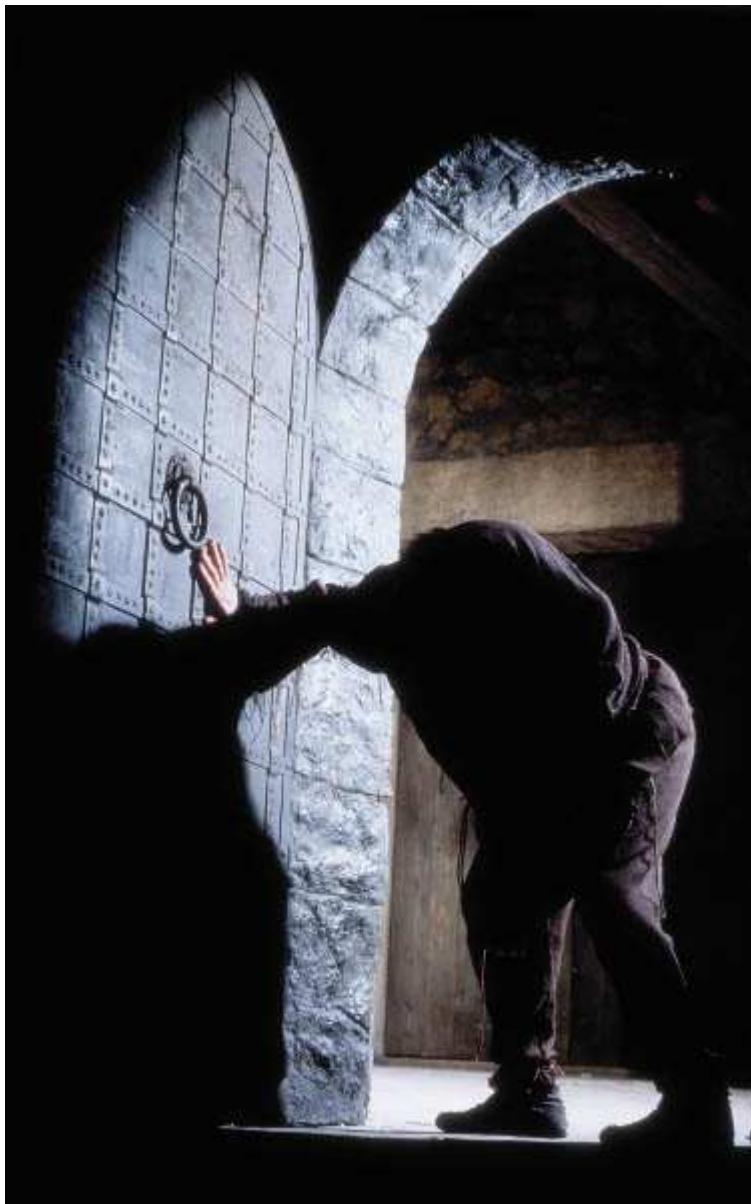
(\*\*\*) "What is the Law?"--With discipline and constant coaching, the Feraleur can push his animalistic impulses down and assume a cultured and civilized mien. The refined, calm behavior of the Hunchback reassures those with contact with him that he is indeed a human being and not a dangerous beast. This allows the Feraleur to designate a number of "Intimates" equal to his Presence with whom he suffers no Social penalties. It duplicates the Carabeau Marque power exactly, with all the same rolls and consequences. This power costs 2 Willpower per day to maintain (Willpower costs are not cumulative through levels of Anthromorphics.) The Hunchback cannot use Misery while at this rank without making a Resolve roll to maintain benefits. Additional Willpower can be spent to insure the success of each such roll.

(\*\*\*\*) "I am not an Animal!"--All bestial features are removed through complex surgical rituals. Less exotic deformities still remain, as does the Hump. All signs of the Bestial are excised from the Hunchback's flesh (and must be cut out every day as they attempt to grow back in). This level does not require Willpower expenditure to maintain. (Though the 2 points to maintain level three are still required.) Anytime the Hunchback is injured or enters a Murder Frenzy, an opposed Resolve vs Hump roll must be made. If the roll is a failure and the Hump succeeds, all bestial features return immediately. Additionally, a Humanity roll must be made with failure resulting in Derangement (most probably bestial rage/paranoia) and additional bestial features are acquired.

(\*\*\*\*\*) "The House of Pain"--Once a Feraleur has reached this rank, he is able to pass the benefits of any lower rank Anthromorphic level on to another Hunchback. This requires an extended surgical ritual that the recipient must be awake throughout. A Resolve roll is made for each hour of the operation (total length of operation is the rank of the desired ability being bestowed). On any failure of this roll, the recipient passes out and the ritual must be begun again once they awaken. The cost for using this power is 1 Misery and 1 Willpower per point of the recipient's Hump rating. The process when complete leaves the recipient with Lethal Wound levels equal to Hump rating. Maintaining the benefit bestowed cost the same daily procedures and

Willpower costs as per the rank power's description. All limitations of that rank are also in effect.

## Morgue



Followers of the Rue de Morgue seek solace in the presence of the Dead. They work as Gravediggers, or Grave Robbers, depending on the whims of their Masters. They seek havens in cemeteries, mausoleums, crypts and catacombs. Seekers of virtually any Sanctuaire may find themselves called to the Rue de Morgue. Concordians attach themselves to the institutions of the dead, sheltering in the places that have become their havens--and looking to the management of those institutions as their Masters. Mabuse are sometimes lured to this Rue by their fascination with the science of embalming. Savagine beastmen find peace in the overgrown grounds of ancient graveyards, among the trees and weeds and wildflowers. Mondelora come to this Rue most often by continuing to follow their worldly attachments beyond Death. The Outrevie are the most common sojourners on the lonely Road of the Dead. They come seeking the guidance and protection of ghosts and other spirits of the grave.

The signature Twist of the Rue de Morgue is Funerallera.

### Funerallera

(\*)"Body Snatcher"—able to dig up and loot graves without attracting attention.

(\*\*) "Freshen Up"--for 1 Misery the user can restore any dead body that is still relatively intact to a "freshly dead" condition. This Twist removes damage caused by rot or scavengers. The body will remain "fresh" for 1 day for every dot the user has in this

Twist. For an additional 1 Willpower, the effects can be made permanent, effectively preserving the body from all decomposition until it is destroyed by other means.

(\*\*\*)"Whispers from Beyond"—can speak with Dead.

(\*\*\*\*)"Hands of the Dead"—causes buried bodies to reach up from graves to grab the ankles and legs of designated target. Can make any dead body reach out and grab a target within arms' reach.

(\*\*\*\*)"Wrath of the Dead"—animates bodies into Zombies which will follow simple commands. Might have a caretaker or necromancer as Patron. Could have a Ghost Patron, or a dead Tragic Love object—ghost or not.

## Noveau

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These Hunchbacks have embraced the technology of the modern era, using the anonymity of the Internet to hide their appearance, though their innate ugliness still manages to make itself known through their online etiquette and habits. The Curse is able to adapt to new conditions and still keeps its deathgrip upon the Miserable, even through remote media. Cybergnomes. Called "Trolls". Computer-using recluses, sequestered in filthy, cluttered little lairs from which they endlessly trawl the Internet. They reap Misery by starting flamewars on forums, or disrupting chatrooms. Tragic Love is usually someone that they've never met or seen, only traded emails with. Internet allows these characters to substitute Mental attributes for Social when making skill rolls. Powers: "IRL"—character can see user on other end of connection, and knows where they live. "Flame"—can incite almost mindless rage, hostility in strangers with specifically worded posts. "Spam"—sends endless repeat messages to a designated target, with only one initial sending. "Virus"—can cause target to obsessively dwell on subject designated by sender

## Quasimodo

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They make their lairs in Churches and Cathedrals. They might have an immediate Mentor or Patron in the form of a Priest or Deacon or other clergy, but their real Patron is "The Church" itself. Possible powers include: "Sanctuary"—cannot be found or harmed while on Church grounds. "Bell-Ringer"—by ringing bells of church, can communicate general emotional state (happy, fearful, angry etc.) to anyone within hearing range who knows the character and the church he is dwelling in. Can be used to cause panic in a group of mortals at close range—right in front of the building. "Gargoyle"—befriends stone gargoyles who befriend him back. They can whisper information about anything they could have seen recently. Possibly spout water as an attack, or even animate as per Enemies section in V:TR

## Savanteur

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Apprentices. Smartest Splat. They serve specialists like doctors or even Mages. Patron usually makes vague promises about "curing" or "fixing" in return for obedience. Never follows through. These are higher grade assistants who actually participate in surgeries or research.

## Encyclopaedie

(\*)"Trivia"--By spending 1 Misery, the user can spontaneously remember a specific name, formula or detail. Even if he's never heard of it before. This can be used to come up with anything from the name of the doctor who pioneered neurosurgery to the exact street address where "that lovely little coffee shop with the cinnamon danishes" can be found. No detailed information can be recovered using this Twist, only a name or location or some basic detail. Chemical formulas can be remembered, but only if they are existing formulas with known effects. This power cannot be used to "remember" the formula for a speculative chemical or drug. (No "what's the formula for that nerve gas that turns people into undead cannibal zombies?"—Unless such a chemical HAS been discovered and encountered in your Chronicle!) Additionally, at this and higher levels, the user can spend 1 Misery to

add dots in Encyclopaedia to any Intelligence dice pool.

(\*\*) "Never Forgets a Face"--The user can spend 1 Misery to automatically recognize the face, name and general biographical details (if previously known) of anyone he has ever met or noticed before, even if the meeting wasn't noted or considered important at the time.

(\*\*\*) "Research Assistant"--The user can find any specific detail or answer to a question if given access to a good-sized library or the Internet. The information has to have actually been there to find in the first place (IE: no "finding" detailed descriptions of an alchemical experiment in the local college's music library.) The user of this Twist can find the desired information in not more than one hour, with the expenditure of 1 Misery. The user can even find scattered references in multiple volumes as long as they are all related to the same topic. ("Hans! I need everything we have on the life and career of this 'Dr. Praetorius! NOW!'")

(\*\*\*\*) "Photographic Memory"--any detail or information that the user has ever seen or read can be recalled in totality. A face can be picked out of a crowd from a gathering three years ago. The color of the second book on Dr. Praetorius' third bookshelf, glimpsed during a brief visit last week. The specific pattern of an EEG run for a patient in 1983. ANY detail. This costs 1 Misery and 1 Willpower to achieve.

(\*\*\*\*\*) "Idiot Savant"--The user spends 1 Misery to attempt any invention or discovery that is desired. An Intelligence + Encyclopaedia roll is necessary and the dice pool can be modified by how difficult the ST thinks the invention is. (More to the point, how likely it is to derail the Chronicle.) Weird Science inventions are the norm for uses of this power. Need a drug that turns people into undead cannibal zombies? Want to know how to attract the "Spark of Life" from lighting? Seeking to combine the DNA of a wild leopard with that of a cute Japanese school girl? Want a really, really good can-opener? Anything can be attempted. If the modified roll is successful, the invention or design will work once, guaranteed. There may be unexpected side effects or consequences, but the darned thing will WORK! Once. With ST approval, Willpower can be spent to buy additional reliable uses. Past that, it's up to the ST as to whether or not the invention continues to work, or if it malfunctions in a truly disasterous but plot-rich way.

## Rites

"With My Master's Hands"--"With My Master's Hands"--can use skills of Master under certain circumstances. (when master is asleep?)

## Valette

Serve as butlers and valets, servants to the rich, and have powers drawn from the inflexibility of Etiquette and Class. Formal wear and manners. Clash of the impeccable and the crude. The character works as a servant in the manor of a wealthy Patron. The two of them establish a sort of symbiotic link. Character's unsettling presence upsets the Patron and household, but without him, the Patron begins to suffer from faux pas, gaffes, stumbles over words, makes embarrassing social errors etc. Position provides some access to Resources. Powers are Etiquette based.

## Domestique

(\*) "Upstairs, Downstairs"--The Valette is aware of anything that has happened within the bounds of the Estate. Only a simple Perception roll is necessary for him to know exactly what was said in a secret, whispered conversation on the third floor--even when he was presumably in the kitchen berating the cook at the time.

(\*\*) "Stiff Upper Lip"--as long as the character maintains impeccable manners, no one present can acknowledge being upset by his presence. Everyone in room is struck with horror or repugnance, but cannot bring themselves to be the first to comment on the cause of their upset. They will strive mightily to ignore him. Additionally, this power removes the usual Social Attribute Penalties associated with Hunchbacks. However repulsed the guests may be, they will act as if the loathesome creature carrying the Champagne glasses is an entirely normal servant. This power costs 1 Misery to activate and will last for the duration of one social event (dance, dinner party, etc.)

(\*\*\*) "Money Talks"--By spending 1 Misery to activate this Twist, the Hunchback can add his Patron/Master's dots in Resources to one scene's worth of Social action's dice pool. The person interacting with the Hunchback may not like dealing with such a creature, but they cannot help but respect the Wealth of his Master.

(\*\*\*\*) "The Butler Did It!"--By spending 1 Misery and 1 Willpower, a Hunchback can shift the blame for any action he has committed within the Estate to another member of the serving staff. New "evidence" will come to light incriminating the new target,

or the person investigating the transgression will interpret even the most blatant evidence of the Hunchback's evildoings as indicating an entirely different suspect.

(\*\*\*\*\*)"Lord Jim"--At this level the Hunchback becomes the de facto ruler of the Estate. A simple Intimidation Roll or Persuasion Roll is required for the Hunchback to dictate actions within the Estate. If that roll is unsuccessful, the Hunchback can spend 1 Misery to attempt it again, this time adding the number of dots in this Twist to his dice pool.

## Antagonists

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### Rue de Sade

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When a Hunchback loses his Master he loses much of what gives direction to his miserable life. Without an authority figure to provide guidance and support, a Hunchback has no defense against his rejection by society. There is no one to give comfort, even if it's just through mind-numbing labor, when a Tragic Love grows unbearable. Hunchbacks aren't just "needy", they genuinely need their Masters. Those who are cast out or separated from their Masters sometimes manage to become Abandonnai. They transform their grief into bitter-flavored Misery, tormenting those who shun them. This is rare though, since most Abandonnai have never had Masters in the first place. They've evolved their special techniques for survival without ever experiencing the comfort of a guiding presence. More often, a Hunchback deprived of a Master goes mad. As solitary, lonely creatures they cause pain and horror to those Mortals that live around them. Such "Rogue Hunches" never survive for very long. Eventually they push the locals too far and wind up as prey for an angry mob. But when such Rogues run across others of their kind, a Lurch forms. They feed each other's bitterness. They begin to relish giving pain to others. They become even more monstrous than they ever were before.

The Rue de Sade is made up of such creatures. Their minds shattered by loneliness, or worse, they spread across the countryside like an insidious infection. de Sades never travel alone. Once they have joined with the Rue, they become part of a predatory Lurch. Each such Lurch has at least one "Marquis", the alpha male or female of the group. The Marquis of a de Sade Lurch is a terrifying being. Clever, ruthless, possessed of dire Twists and knowledgeable in the ways of Torture. they become surrogate Masters to their wretched minions.

Anytime a Hunchback kills another of The Miserable, there is a supernatural backlash. The Curse burns those who would escape their fate by murdering each other. Those scholars who study The Miserable believe that this is a kind of built-in punishment The Curse has, intended to prevent Hunchbacks from escaping their fate by killing each other. Indeed, if it weren't for the intensity of this backlash (which will incapacitate the offending Hunchback with searing agony, if it doesn't knock him unconscious altogether) Hunchbacks would be free to escape their horrid lives through group-suicides. That strategy has been tried before. The results were too horrible for those who attempted it to even consider a repeat of the attempt. Causing the death of another Hunchback marks the face of the murderer with a livid purple blotch, much like a Port-Wine birthmark, but more malignant and cancerous in appearance. This mark cannot be disguised or hidden from other Hunchbacks. Even if they cannot see the mark, they will be able to smell the corruption the marked one carries. No Hunchback is admitted as a sojourner on the Rue de Sade until he has murdered at least one other Hunchback and won his mark. Until that time any would-be Lurcher is just "Meat" to the others. Fair game for any sort of amusement that they can design. The de Sade all wear leather masks over their faces, more as a badge or gang color than any effort at disguise. They carve horrid designs in their own flesh, or in the flesh of other Lurchers. Most have piercings and scarifications that go beyond anything that a normal human could bear. Some even outline or decorate their Murder-Marks with thick black or blue tattoos. The de Sade are so numb to their own Misery that they can now only draw energy from the suffering of others. Torture is their favorite method of extracting a fresh supply. While the weak flesh of Mortals provides them with some amusement and a little Misery to soak in, they prefer to prey on their own kind. Whether this is out of twisted self-loathing or because they know that a fellow Hunchback can absorb much more damage over a longer time than any mortal could, none can tell.

### The Fine Art of Torture

Torture is the "art" of causing extreme distress over time, usually with the intent to not kill the target anytime soon. It can be a tool for interrogation, an expression of deviant sexual urges, a technique for brainwashing and behavior conditioning, or simply entertainment for the bored cruel. For Rue de Sade Hunchbacks, it is their primary way to reap Misery and maintain their Supernatural Twists. For game mechanics purposes, Torture can be divided into three types; Physical, Mental and Social. The Victim has "Health Levels" in all three areas, though only Physical Health Levels are generally used in NWOD games. Determine the victim's Mental Health Levels by adding Resolve to 5. Social Health Levels add Composure to 5. Physical Health Levels record the actual damage to flesh and tissue. Reduced Health Levels come with Wound modifiers to dice pools as normal. A Victim reduced to "0" Health is dead, unless drastic measures are immediately taken to revive him. Mental Health Levels represent the Victim's ability to think rationally and remain cognizant of the reality around him. Reduced Mental Health Levels carry the same Wound Modifiers to Dice Pools. As a Victim's Mental Health Levels are whittled down, they are literally "losing their

Reduced to "0", Mental Health Levels result in a comatose, vegetative state in which no rational thought is possible. This can be cured with intense psychological care and therapy, but the healing process is very slow. At "0" the Victim has become virtually "mindless" and healing can only take place at the discretion of the Storyteller. Social Health Levels represent the Victim's measure of self-esteem and sense of individual worth. Damage to these Social Health Levels is done through Discipline procedures and de-humanizing treatment. Reduced to "0", the Victim becomes totally incapable of resisting commands. All sense of Self has been broken and all that remains is barely more than a hollow shell with no internal motivation or feelings of worth. Healing a Victim reduced to "0" Social Health takes prolonged positive contact with others and a great deal of patience. Neither of which are likely for a Hunchback Victim. Healing to above "0" can only be done with Storyteller approval.

The Torturer makes contested rolls, of Attribute + relevant skill. Several can be used: Medicine, Intimidation, Melee etc. Virtually any Skill can be applied to a Torture roll with a little imagination. The Torturer's roll is resisted by the Resistance Attribute of the Victim. Willpower points can be spent by both sides. Alternately, the Torturer can attempt a Finesse Attribute Roll vs his Victim's Finesse Attributes in order to gain resulting Successes as a Bonus to the next Torture Roll. (Contested Roll, highest number of Successes wins. Number of Successes above opponent's roll equals resulting dice pool bonus in next Torture session roll.) A Rue de Sade Torturer reaps 1 Misery for each Health Level that is reduced through torture. Note: this is for prolonged, ritualistic torture. Even a Rue de Sade cannot gain Misery merely from punching or kicking or inflicting gross damage through combat. Reaping Misery through Torture takes at least one hour per roll. At the Storyteller's discretion, a Victim with a Fortitude, Hope or Faith Virtue may recover Willpower every time she resists a Torturer's roll. The Torturer may, however, also recover Willpower for indulging a number of Vices (Wrath, Lust, Envy are especially appropriate). This can easily result in a prolonged battle of Wills between Torturer and Victim. Such competitions are fairly common even for Mortals in similar situations.

**Bashing vs Lethal Damage.** Assume all Torture damage is Bashing. Lethal Damage isn't done until all the Health Levels have been filled up with Bashing Damage. Hunchback's can still spend Misery to heal Bashing damage, but without normal interactions as a means to recover spent Misery, it would behoove the Victim to preserve their Misery points for as long as possible.

A Hunchback reduced to 0 Mental, Physical, or Social Health Levels can be changed into "Meat" for a de Sade Lurch through ritual means. Replace the entire set of Attributes governed by the lost Health Levels with the Hunchback Victim's Hump rating. The Curse now controls him utterly, either by animating his dead torn flesh, or replacing his Intellect with its own sinister cunning, or by totally absorbing the Victim's sense of self until he is nothing more than an extension of the Hump itself, a Drone for the Curse.

## Gargoyles

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Gargoyles are creatures that are sculpted out of stone and then given animation through Magick. Generally, they are created by Mages to protect specific buildings, though there are also Gargoyles that have been created through Thebian Sorcery rituals, and even a few who became Imbued after being sculpted by hand. Regardless of origins, all Gargoyles share certain common traits. They are all sculpted from stone. They all spend most of their time dormant in a sort of hibernation. And they are all immensely

territorial, animating solely to protect their buildings from Supernatural intruders.

Hunchbacks are exactly the sort of parasitic Supernatural vermin that Gargoyles were created to keep out. Especially bitter are the feuds between Concordian Hunchbacks who have chosen a Sanctuary building that is guarded by a Gargoyles. The two creatures will spend most of each night hunting and evading each other, each using their own Supernatural abilities to outmatch the other. Usually, however, such combatants are fairly equally matched and some such feuds can go on for decades, even centuries.

Only followers of the Rue de Quasimodo do not fear Gargoyles. Indeed, the Quasimodos have Twists that help them coexist with Gargoyles, bend them to service, and sometimes even create them outright. Stats and game mechanics for Gargoyles can be found in the VAMPIRE: THE REQUIEM corebook.

But for those who would like a more personalized Gargoyle, it is possible to "back-engineer" some guidelines for designing individual Gargoyles.

First, STR and STA are determined by Size (inherent in the stone of their construction). STR & STA are both equal to Size. Dexterity is equal to 7-Size. Size 7 is about the largest a Gargoyle can be constructed at, without needing enough exotic magics that it becomes something else entirely.

Mental and Social Attributes each have 6 points to distribute among them. Assume that a Mage constructing a Gargoyle has roughly Mind 3, Spirit 3, and Matter equal to the size of the finished Gargoyle. A Mage with higher Mind or Spirit ratings can add a number of points to the relevant Attributes equal to her Mind/Spirit levels. The creature starts with one point in each Mental and Social Attribute. That is a function of the magic that creates them. Additional points equal to Mind and Spirit can be added to that base.

All Gargoyles get a +2(B) bonus to attack dice pools. (Due to their stone construction.)

For Skills, assume a 7 Primary, 4 Secondary, and 2 Tertiary pool of Skill points. This should allow for a Gargoyle that has some variety.

Common Merits include: Danger Sense, Unseen Sense and perhaps even some from "Second Sight"--to allow the finished Gargoyle to have unexpected abilities or powers.

### Sample Gargoyle

Virtue: Justice Vice: Wrath

INT: 1 WIT: 3 RES: 2

STR: 3 DEX: 4 STA: 3

PRE: 2 MAN: 1 COM: 3

SKILLS: Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Stealth 2, Intimidation 2, Expression (song) 1, Occult 2.

POWERS: Gush--Can expel a stream of water under high pressure once per scene. Dex+Athletics+2(B). If even one success is made, target must make STR vs. STR roll to stay on feet. Otherwise, knocked to the ground in a puddle of rainwater.

Wings--Can fly at twice Speed rate per turn.

Claws--in HTH combat, STR+Brawl+2(L)

MERITS: Eidetic Memory, Unseen Sense

Size: 3 Health: 6 Willpower: 5 Defense: 3 Armor: 2 Initiative mod.:7 Speed: 8

DESCRIPTION: (see illo. above) This is a smallish Gargoyle, designed as a "working" gargoyle and not just a statuary grotesque. Its sculpted wings, fangs and claws are all quite functional once it is activated. Normally it sits upon its perch and watches traffic. It activates if it senses any Supernatural present and perceives a threat to Mortals in its sight. On its first action upon activating, it will let out a peal of angelic song as it swoops upwards into the sky. On the next turn it will powerdive at the offending Supernatural (additional +2L if attack succeeds.) It will use its Gush power to separate the Supernatural from its perceived Mortal victim before pressing its attack. Eidetic Memory lets it memorize the face or appearance of any Supernatural it has encountered, but also lets it remember exactly how the last fight went. This allows the creature to become more effective in future combats with the same opponent. Add +1 Bonus to Dice Pools against known targets for each previous time they have fought, up to a maximum Bonus of +3. It has fought Hunchbacks before and knows enough to target the Hump directly in order to do Aggravated damage.

## Torsos



Torsos are among the strangest and rarest of the bizarre inhabitants of the World of Darkness. Their origins are unknown as are their ultimate intentions. A Torsos appears to be a quadriplegic, a normal human being who has lost both arms and both legs. Indeed, most Torsos began their existence as a normal mortal, before falling prey to another of their kind.

“Torsos”, there is no other name for them currently in use, are actually supernatural assassins. They have retractable fangs which inject a paralytic poison (Potency of Poison is equal to twice the Torsos “Spine” rating as a dice pool). Their tongue conceals a tubular proboscis which they use to suck the spinal fluid out of human beings. They use this spinal fluid, “Tap” in their parlance, to power supernatural abilities. Every Torsos requires at least one point of “Tap” per day to survive, or rather to remain active. Torsos also create more of their kind by paralyzing a victim, then slowly chewing off one limb at a time. Limbs have about three Health Levels. Once the Torsos has inflicted three levels of lethal damage by gnawing, the limb will become totally unusable and fall off. All Torsos have the ability to attach a severed limb to their own stumps. This costs three points of Tap per limb. The attached limb slowly rots, losing one Health Level per day unless more Tap is poured into it. Each point of Tap spent per day will keep the limb from losing one Health Level to rot. Without borrowed limbs, a Torsos can only move at 1/5 the normal movement rate. (calculate movement as normal then reduce it to 20%) If a victim survives having all four limbs gnawed off, a Torsos can spend 1 Tap (pouring spinal fluid from their own mouth into the mouth of the victim) and 1 Willpower to create a new Torsos.

Torsos have prehensile lips and six inch long tongues, enabling them to handle small objects and operate some types of machinery. They can use these for all manner of recreational purposes, perhaps best not mentioned.

Torsos take only Bashing damage from any source other than the bite or claw of another Supernatural. The only way to kill one permanently is to decapitate it. Even then there is a chance that the head will continue its unnatural existence unchecked.

Torsos divide themselves into three distinct types based on the nature of their locomotion and innate abilities. These divisions are called “Squirms” among their own kind.

**Ophidios**—The Ophidios possess long supple torsos. Their spines have altered in such a way that they can slither comfortably, like a snake. Often their necks elongate, allowing them to hold their heads up from the ground. As they lose Humanity, they acquire snake-like features; forked tongues, vertical slit pupils, light scaling on their skin, odd coloration, etc. Ophidios Torsos often have beautiful features and attractive bodies. They are sensuous hedonists at heart and are noted for enjoying long Tap Spooning. Some use songs to mesmerize their prey. The Ophidios are quick and sinuous creatures. They gain a +1 to Dexterity. Ophidios Powers are: Mesmerize and Quick-Slither

**Vermis**—The Vermis possess thicker, stouter bodies. They move by an “inchworm” like motion which can range from a jerky lurching to an undulating wave. Their bodies tend to be well-padded with fat deposits, though not to such a degree that their movement is impaired. (beyond the impairment experienced by all Torsos, that is). Vermis Torsos tend to have round faces and both sexes are often bald. A side effect of their movement style is that they have very precise memories of distances traveled and relative positions. If a Vermis has crossed a particular area of terrain or rooms in a building, she will always remember exactly how many “inches” it took to cross that area. Vermis are stout, stocky creatures. They gain a +1 to Stamina. Vermis Powers are: Wall Crawling and Silent Movement

**Stumpers**—Some Torsos possess more than the usual mere bump or smooth surface where their limbs once were. These Torsos, called “Stumpers” by others—but more often calling themselves “Stubwalkers”, have vestigial stubs and knobs at their shoulder and hip joints. Rarely more than a couple of inches long, these are still strong enough and broad enough to allow the Torsos to use them as legs of a sort. Most Stubwalkers use a quadrupedal motion, walking on the stubs and holding their bodies just off the ground. Some can manage to rear up and do a slow waddle using only their hip knobs. Stubwalkers tend to be

stronger than other types of Torsos. They have well-developed muscles and tend to look rather like body builders with huge pectorals and six-pack bellies. Their jaws are thicker than the human norm, a clue to the massive jaw muscles they possess. Stubwalkers are powerful creatures. They can flex their muscles and "leap" up off the ground, reaching eye-level of a normal human. They gain a +1 to Strength. Stubwalker Powers are: Iron Jaws and Phantom Limbs

## Powers

*Iron Jaws*: cost 1 Tap. Enables the user to bite through wood and metal. If used in combat, adds three dice to the STR dice pool. Damage is Lethal to Mortals and Supernaturals both, but is not Aggravated.

*Mesmerize*: cost 1 Tap. The user makes either eye contact or voice contact with the target. When the power is activated, the user makes a contested roll using Presence +1 against the target's Resolve. If the Torsos gains more successes, the target is immobilized, held in a hypnotic state. Usually immobilization is the desired goal, but the Mesmerist can also choose to implant a simple idea or command that will be carried out at a later time. Such commands must be very simple "Open the door/window" "Go outside at ten o'clock" etc.

*Phantom Limbs*: cost 1 Tap per turn of use. Target acquires the use of a normal limb (number of phantom limbs created is equal to Spine rating). This invisible, immaterial but physically effective limb has the same STR as the user.

*Quick-Slither*: cost 1 Tap/increased increment per turn. User can move much faster than normal. At 1 Tap the Torsos can move at half of a normal human's movement rate. At 2 Tap, full normal movement speed. At 3 Tap, twice normal movement. Movement cannot be boosted beyond four times normal human movement (cost 4 Tap).

*Silent Movement*: cost 1 Tap. User can move silently at full Torsos normal rate through dried leaves or other obstacles without making a sound. Passage through grass or other vegetation will leave no visible mark. (ie: no waving grass or disturbed leaves etc.) The user can even pass through liquids or over powders without leaving a trail.

*Wall-Crawling*: cost 1 Tap/turn. User can move over vertical surfaces at normal movement rate. With an additional 1 Willpower expenditure, the user can cling to or travel across ceilings as well. Very useful for dropping down on an opponent in ambush.

**Torsos and Hunchbacks** Torsos feed on spinal fluid. This one fact is the thing that has led to the venomous animosity between Torsos and Hunchbacks. The spinal fluid of a Hunchback, being in such close proximity to the supernatural Hump, acquires properties entirely different from that of normal Mortals. To the Torsos, it tastes much bitterer—but at the same time has a profound intoxicating effect. Torsos who have fed off of Hunchbacks often become addicted to "Hunch-Tap" after a single feeding. They crave the bitter flavor and the dreams of suffering and torment they experience while digesting the tainted Tap. For the Torsos, those dreams—the experiences of the "donor" Hunchback, are experienced in a detached manner that lets them look down upon the suffering as from a great distance. Since their own existences are cursed and wretched, the Torsos savor the opportunity to wallow in the fact that someone else is even MORE miserable than they are. It makes them snicker. And giggle. And sometimes drool with unseemly delight.

The spinal fluid of Hunchbacks delivers twice the Tap that an equal volume from a Mortal would provide. On top of that, the Hunchback can be drained practically to nothing and will still recover. The distilled Misery in their Humps can replace the Health Levels they lose to the Torsos' draining on a one to one level. Hunchbacks therefore are not only more tasty and intoxicating, they can be used to provide a stable long-term supply. Woe betide the Hunchback who finds herself the captive of hungry Torsos! Additionally, if the Hump rating of the Hunchback is greater than the Spine rating of the Torsos, the Torsos can increase his Spine rating by one, temporarily. This temporary bonus lasts only as long as the Tap pool taken from that particular Hunchback lasts, and then only so long as the Torsos does not feed from any other creature.

## Sample Torsos

### Ophidios Seducer

Virtue: Temperance Vice: Lust

INT: 2 WIT: 3 RES: 2

STR: 2 DEX:4 STA: 2

PRE: 3 MAN:3 COM:2

SKILLS: Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Stealth 5, Persuasion 3, Subterfuge 4, Occult 2, Medicine 2

MERITS: Hypnosis, Combat Finesse, Striking Looks, Retainers

FLAWS: Deformity--lacking all four limbs, elongated appearance.

POWERS: Mezmerize, Quick Slither, Silent Movement

Health: 7 Willpower: 4 Morality: 2

DERANGEMENTS: Narcissism

Size: 4 Speed: 3 Defense: 3 Initiative Mod.: 7

TAP POOL: 7 SPINE: 2

DESCRIPTION: Long, lean torso with flawless flesh. Often has long flowing hair, but also often shaves bald and covers scalp with tattoos. Features are generally androgynous and beautiful in the extreme, with a sultry, seductive whisper of a voice. Ophidios prefer long, subtle seductions--drawing their prey to them at a time and place of their choosing. They create opulent lairs with silk sheets and plush cushions--almost always having some sort of bathing pool so they can soak their skin to keep it flawlessly soft. The Ophidios will surround herself with admirers and lovers, most mesmerized--but more than a few may serve of their own free will and fascination. More than one Hunchback has fallen for an Ophidios as a Tragic Love, only to discover that he means nothing to the Torso beyond a renewable and delightful source of Tap.

### **Vermis Plotter**

Virtue: Prudence Vice: Sloth

INT: 2 WITS: 2 RES: 3

STR: 3 DEX: 2 STA: 4

PRE: 2 MAN: 2 COM: 3

SKILLS: Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Stealth 3, Occult 2, Politics 1, Investigation 3, Intimidation 2, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 2

MERITS: Eidetic Memory, Iron Stamina, Retainers

FLAWS: Deformity, all four limbs missing--body and features have puffy look to them.

POWERS: Wall Crawling, Silent Movement, Quick Slither

Health: 9 Willpower: 6 Morality: 2

DERANGEMENTS: Obsessive Compulsion

Size: 4 Speed: 2 Defense: 2 Initiative Mod.: 5

TAP POOL: 9 SPINE: 2

DESCRIPTION: A plump, rounded torso with round, puffy features, sometimes with bristly hair. Most likely to have a deep, grumbly voice, husky and domineering. The Vermis does not like to do anything without long and careful planning. They are cautious to the extreme and as patient as their thirst for Tap allows. A Vermis Plotter will likely be aware of the PC's long before they are aware of him. He will make every effort to spy upon them, to investigate their backgrounds, find out their weaknesses before he makes any move against them. He will use his ability to crawl across walls and ceilings to spy on them from above. Vermis like to acquire agents to carry out their plans, but they do not trust anyone that they do not have a complete hold over. Most of their Retainers are likely to be "Tappies", Mortals who have become addicted to the painful but almost narcotic sensation of having their spinal fluids sucked out. When the Vermis does finally make his move, he will most likely use traps, snares and an unexpected drop from above to score the coup.

### **Stumper Gutbiter**

Virtue: Fortitude Vice: Wrath

INT: 2 WIT: 3 RES: 2 STR: 4 DEX: 2 STA: 3 PRE: 2 MAN: 2 COM: 2

SKILLS: Athletics 3, Brawl 4, Drive (Wheelchair): 1, Survival 1, Stealth 2, Academics 2, Occult 2, Intimidation 4, Animal Ken 1, Streetwise 3

MERITS: Brawling Dodge, Strong Back, Allies

FLAWS: Deformity--all four limbs missing, with only knobby stumps left, oversized jaw.

POWERS: Iron Jaws, Phantom Limbs, Quick Slither

Health: 8 Willpower: 4 Morality: 1

DERANGEMENTS: Paranoia

Size: 4 Speed: 3 Defense: 2 Initiative Mod: 4

TAP POOL: 8 SPINE: 2

**DESCRIPTION:** Stumpers are both the most normal and the most feral of the Torsos. Their greater ability to move about in the Limbed world allows them to interact with normal Mortals more often than the other Squirms. They can use wheelchairs with greater facility than the others and thus have more access than might otherwise be the case. On the other hand, their paranoia and innate ferocity makes it difficult for them to function for very long among normal Mortals without drawing undue attention to themselves.

Stumpers are not subtle. They do not plan. They leap to attack anything that threatens, frightens, or annoys them. And they bite it. Over and over again. Their Iron Jaws power allows them to bite through metal bars, chew through car doors, or sever limbs with a single bite. Their favorite combat tactic is to leap straight for the guts or the genitals and chew their way to victory. Possibly the most dangerous aspect of the Stumpers is that they seldom act as solitary hunters. They prefer to hunt in packs of three to four, sometimes more. Such packs do not stay together for very long. The Stumpers' paranoia acts to break them up quickly, but members of a dissolved pack (or the survivors of the ferocious battle for dominance) will quickly gravitate toward other Torsos and form new packs.

All the other Torsos will be most commonly encountered as solitary hunters, with a stable circle of Retainers. Stumpers will create more of their kind to form a pack if no others are nearby. When they move, it is generally in the company of allies. Beat-up vans and RV's full of Stumper Torsos wander the highways, always on the hunt for more Tap.

## Twisted City: Pittsburgh

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For reasons unknown to most of The Miserable, Pittsburgh contains the largest number of Hunchbacks assembled in one city in the US, possibly even in the world (with Paris being the other main contender). So many Hunchbacks have settled in the city that other Hunchbacks can feel the Lurching tugging at them from as far away as Denver. For years The Miserable have been trickling into the city, drawn by some unknown force. Each new arrival makes the city's Lurching more powerful and extends its reach ever farther. There are so many Hunchbacks present in the city that they have formed multiple Lurches, usually centered around common Masters, but also including Lurches of Hunchbacks with no shared Master, no relationship at all save that they find each other's presence comforting. Few have any idea that they have been drawn into the web of an Ancient of unimaginable power who even now stirs sluggishly to life beneath the streets of the city.

**The Mound of Misery** Long before the European settlers worked their way into the region, the area around modern Pittsburgh was the territory of the Allegewi. There are many strange stories about the Allegewi. Some said that there were giants among them, others that they were covered with thick hair. Burial mounds opened by settlers revealed radically deformed skeletons, with grave goods and in positions suggesting that they were particularly honored by their tribesmen. The Mound is one such being, incomparably ancient, cunning and filled with the bitter bile of its Misery.

When the Lenni Lenape Indians, with their Mengwe allies, swarmed over the land of the Allegewi, they put everything they could find to the torch, burning out whole villages, some say—to wipe a corruption, a contamination, from the face of the earth.

The Mound was already ancient by that time. Its Hump was so swollen that there was barely room for a face on it and tiny, useless limbs hanging from its sides. Its eyes though, were huge and dark and could see across the Abyss and into the future. It had powers unimagined by modern Hunchbacks. Knowing that the end of its people had arrived, The Mound ordered them to cover it with dirt, heaving bucketfuls over its vast spongy Hump until it was buried under several feet of earth, appearing to any observer to be nothing more than a not particularly impressive burial mound. The creature inside lapsed into a deep, deep sleep, hibernating the years away. The ground beneath it became marshy and The Mound sunk somewhat. Then, the city of Pittsburgh was built up over and around it. For two centuries it has lurked, unknown, beneath the foundations of the city. Only recently has it stirred to sluggish consciousness, a hollow husk of what it once was. PennDoT's failed attempts to start digging on a Pittsburgh subway system—which never materialized—were enough to goad it to consciousness.

With The Mound slowly becoming aware of its surroundings, reaching upward through brick and concrete with its mind, it became a magnet for lesser Hunchbacks. They could feel the tugging of the Lurching as far away as the West Coast and Mexico. By ones then twos and threes, the Miserable began to make the pilgrimage to their Twisted City, never knowing why they were drawn thus, but only that their destiny lay within "The Pitt".

**The Lily of Liberty Avenue**--Hidden in the back of the Liberty Belle Adult Arcade, on Liberty Avenue, is a most exotic flower. Beyond the racks of adult magazines, past the tiny viewing room booths, just behind the Live Girls showrooms, is an unmarked black door. For a few dollars, the guy at the counter will give a patron the key to that door. Inside is a small, foul-smelling booth with a glass window. After the customer pushes a doorbell button inside the booth, a panel on the back wall slides up, revealing the face of the most gorgeous girl working the Liberty. Raven black hair, alabaster white skin, red-red lips full and inviting, and eyes like pools of turquoise seawater. Lily only ever shows her face above the dividing panel, a spotlight illuminates just her face, leaving the rest of the tiny room in darkness. She will discuss anything the customer wishes. She will be delicate and soft spoken or raunchy and foul-mouthed, as the customer requests. No matter what the desires of the customer may be, they feel utterly at ease with Lily, completely free of inhibitions or guilt or shyness. She is the perfect conversationalist, a living face-to-face phonesex experience beyond compare. Customers must pass more tokens or bills through the bank-teller slot at the bottom of the glass panel. Bold customers willing to pay the price, may slip something else through the slot and receive manual or oral pleasures delivered with exquisite technique. None of them suspect that the body beneath the gorgeous face is grotesque and stunted, like a figurine of white wax partially melted and twisted by cruel hands. Lily the Hunchback serves her Master, Damon David Jones--aka: "Double-D" Jones with weary loyalty. She performs countless sexual acts a day at his request, but dreams always of True Love and Romance. Double-D Jones is one of the most domineering of the Liberty Avenue pimps. He's built like a football player gone to flab and has the personality of a rabid pitbull. His smile is wide and white, like a shark's, and is just about as friendly. Lily's Tragic Love is a shy, unremarkable customer who can barely meet her adoring gaze and has never done anything more explicit with her than chat about romantic poetry, despite her frequent invitations. He has never given her his name and blushes furiously when asked. She fervently believes that what keeps bringing him back to her is True Love, chaste and gentle. She'll do anything to convince him to consummate their relationship, not knowing that this would scare him off and end the relationship immediately.

**Slaves of The Brain**--At the peak of the Cathedral of Learning, there is a secret room, hidden even on the blueprints and schematics of the building. Within that room is a huge glass-walled aquarium filled with briny nutrient fluids and containing a living Brain the size of a shopping cart. The Brain is the creation of a cabal of Mages who were once active in the area. Calling themselves the "Circle of Savants", these Mages sought to explore the nature and limits of intelligence. Toward that end they summoned data spirits and intellect-phantoms which they bound within a mass of artificially grown brain tissue. The tissue was assembled from many actual human brains, brains that were acquired for the Mages by the Hunchbacks that served several of them. When the ritual of the Mages was completed and The Brain quivered to life, the first thing it did was devour the intellects of its creators. Their mindless bodies still lie in the room, vessels that The Brain can fill and animate at its leisure. The Brain requires fresh doses of intellect to sustain it over time. This can be provided in the form of human brains that are dumped into the tank and slowly absorbed by the cerebral horror, or it can be drained from a living victim. For unknown reasons, The Brain spared the Hunchback servitors of the Mages it destroyed and it has recruited most of them to act as its servants, its hands in the wider world outside its brothy tank. These Hunchbacks haunt the Cathedral of Learning, spying on classes through ventilation shafts, disguised as janitors, creeping through access crawlways, always vigilant for the signs of genius among students that would indicate a potential meal for their Master. These Hunchbacks have as their Tragic Loves, various of the students, faculty and research assistants who work in the building. Too often, they are attracted to the beautiful and the bright ones, ones who are just too tasty for their Master to ignore.

**Servants of the Broken Circle**--Opposing the Servants of the Brain is a smaller Lurch of Hunchbacks, former servitors of the late Circle of Savants who would not bow to their Masters' murderer. Few in number but fervent in their determination to stop The Brain and its minions, these Hunchbacks have adopted the Concordian Sanctuaire as their guiding principle. They serve not one single Master, but the institution of the Cathedral of Learning. They are the self-appointed Guardians of the university. They have been forced out of the Cathedral itself, after many fierce battles with their former allies, and now make their lairs in nearby buildings or in the sub-basement access tunnels. Their greatest ambition is to fight their way up the tower into the chamber of their nemesis and bash The Brain.

**The Buck-Ohs**--Beserk Hunchback Pirates fans, the members of this Lurch (they call themselves a "Team") once lurked in the hidden byways of Three Rivers Stadium. They have not yet adapted to their new quarters in the recently built PNC Park stadium. Members of The Team adopt names taken from their sports heroes, such as Roberto, Big Willie and The Maz'. They wear vintage Pirates uniforms and are wicked brutal when swinging their baseball bat clubs. Originally serving different Masters, the members of the Buck-Ohs have all gravitated to the service of Coach Juice, Danny "Juice" Johnson--a former trainer and assistant coach for the Pirates who was fired for providing team members with steroids. Juice went quite crazy when he was fired and has been living inside the stadium ever since. He has a duplicate set of passkeys that give him access to all parts of the building. "The Phantom of PNC Park", Juice Johnson lurks in plain sight most of the time, disguised as a sports fan, a vendor, one of the maintenance crews, even as an active staff member of the team. He sleeps in a service-access sub-basement that few staff members even know exists. He's worked to build a warren of secret doors and crawlways, worming their way through the underdecks of the stadium. Some of the lockers in the locker-rooms have hidden back doors, back panels that can be taken out from behind, which allows Juice or his Hunchbacks an entrance from the passages inside the walls into the lockers and then into the locker rooms. Coach Juice is currently obsessed with the idea of creating "The Perfect Player", the ultimate all-round baseball player skilled at all the aspects of the game. At the moment he is experimenting with ever more exotic steroid formulas, usually tested on hapless Minor Leaguers seeking a way into the Majors. It is only a matter of time before his deranged mind starts to combine steroid formulas with assembled parts and stumbles onto the secret of producing a Promethean Uber-Athlete. The

Buck-Ohs often have current team members as their Tragic Loves (sometimes this attraction is romantic/sexual in nature, but more often it is an extreme sort of hero-worship), but some have been attracted to the wives of team members, to frequent game attendees and even to the girl who works part time in the ticket office.

**The Sammartinos**--A small but powerfully vicious Hunchback biker gang. All members of the gang are followers of the Rue de Bruno. Due to their gruesome looks and obvious deformities, the Sammartinos are rarely active during the day, preferring to operate under the cover of darkness. They move their base of operations about regularly, generally operating within a thirty mile radius around Pittsburgh. Abandoned rail tunnels, barns and rundown warehouses are their main choices for havens. To the general public, such as know anything at all about them, they are monstrous biker-gang thugs who specialize in home invasions and terrorizing the countryside. To other Hunchbacks, they are known for their generosity and willingness to come to the aid of any of The Miserable who ask for their help. More than one of Pittsburgh's Hunchbacks have been rescued from an angry mob or an enraged Werewolf or Vampire by the sudden appearance of a half dozen screaming Sammartinos on their roaring bikes. The Sammartinos don't like to get involved in conflicts between Lurches, but are sometimes willing to hire out as mercenaries, usually demanding large quantities of Iron City beer as payment. Notable current members include Leopoldo, Francesco, Batts, Z-Boy and Chilly.

## Sources

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- *Notre Dame de Paris* (1911) Early version of the Victor Hugo novel. Henry Krauss stars as Quasimodo.
- *Der Bucklige und die Tanzerin/The Hunchback and the Dancer* (1920) Murnau lost film. Descriptions and plot synopsis very interesting. Rich Hunchback falls in love with a dancer. His mastery of chemicals and make-up draw her to him. When she is courted by other men, the Hunchback uses chemicals to create a poison that kills any who kiss her--in the form of a lipstick.
- *Esmeralda* (1922) Another early version. Booth Conway plays Quasimodo.
- *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1923) The classic Lon Chaney version. The ninth highest grossing silent movie of all time. The Grand-daddy of all the Universal Monster movies that followed.
- *Frankenstein* (1931) Henry Frankenstein's twisted assistant Fritz originates the archetype of the Hunchback as Mad Doctor's servant. Dwight Frye's performance is manic, twitchy, filled with sadistic glee and generally a joy to behold.
- *The Phantom Broadcast* (1933) A mystery picture which features a radio/singing star and his hunchbacked manager. Eventually it's revealed that the handsome frontman is nothing but a pawn and the real voice and the real talent belonged to the Hunchback. Textbook example of a Rue de Cyrano Hunchback at work!
- *Condemned to Live* (1935) Misha Auer plays Zan the Hunchback, a servant who is loyal to a beloved village doctor, who just might be the vampire behind a string of recent deaths.
- *The Face in the Fog* (1936) A hunchbacked murderer called "The Fiend" stalks victims, but is not who or what he appears to be.
- *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1939) Charles Laughton's portrayal of Quasimodo is very different from the Chaney version, but still a classic.
- *Dead Men Walk* (1943) Dwight Frye plays Zolarr, the hunchbacked servant of a vampire. Frye's last role and a pale shadow of his previous performances. Still, this one has a vampire, black magic, sibling rivalry, suggestions of incestuous Uncle to Niece desires and a Hunchback servant at work in a foggy graveyard. Not much more one could ask for!
- *House of Frankenstein* (1944) J. Carroll Naish's hunchbacked Daniel is the most murderous of all the Universal Hunchbacks. Again, the archetypal Mad Doctor's assistant, complete with a Tragic Love for a doomed Gypsy girl.
- *House of Dracula* (1945) Jane Adams plays Nina, Dr. Edelman's hunchbacked nurse/lab assistant. She's not at all a "Monster", despite what the posters and trailers for the film suggested!
- *Notre Dame de Paris* (1956) The familiar story, this time told with a greater emphasis on the human drama and humanity of the characters. Anthony Quinn plays Quasimodo. Gina Lollobrigida plays Esmeralda. Worth watching just for that!
- *Phantom of the Opera* (1962) Herbert Lom's Phantom lives in the sewers beneath a London Opera House, with his mute Hunchback servant. A clever melding of the two great Chaney roles into one film. Sort of.
- *Kaidan Semushi Otoko/Ghost of the Hunchback* (1965) Atmospheric, Bava-flavored Japanese horror film about a doctor and his assistant who decide to stay in a ruined house, despite the warnings of its resident Hunchback.

- *The Body Beneath & Guru, the Mad Monk* (1970) Two movies from Andy Milligan which have hunchbacked evil servants in them. If you're not already familiar with Andy Milligan or his work, just DON'T! Milligan is something of an acquired taste. And not often a good one at that. Still, there is a cult following for his films (I find them oddly entertaining, and I've got the Dementations to prove it!) and these ones DO have "hunchbacks" in them. So they made the list. Jaw dropping. Mind boggling. Giggles and choke on popcorn fun.
- *The Hunchback of the Morgue* (1973) Paul Naschy plays Gotho the Hunchback. Gotho stays true to his Tragic Love, even after she dies and gets all cold and stuff. Then he throws in with a--you guessed it!--a Mad Scientist who is putting together pieces of corpses with bad intent. Things do not turn out...well.
- *The Body Shop* (1973) A Mad Scientist and his faithful hunchbacked servant, Greg, collect body parts to bring the Doc's dead wife Anitra back to life. Greg. I kid you not.
- *Captain Kronos--Vampire Hunter* (1974) A Hunter goes after the living dead with his loyal hunchback friend. This time, the Hunchback picks the right side to be a sidekick for! It still does not end well. It rarely does, for Hunchbacks.
- *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1975) If I didn't include this one, somebody out there would cry. Riff Raff proves that even a Hunchback can get mad as hell and decide not to take it anymore! In song.
- *The Name of the Rose* (1986) Not really a horror genre movie, but this Medieval Mystery classic presents another view of a Hunchback character who has sought shelter with the Church. Great performances and a nifty story make it worth watching.
- *Big Man on Campus* (1989) Heh. Just threw that one in to see if you were still awake! A comedy, and not a terribly high brow one at that, but it does present an interesting germ of an idea with its Hunchback lurking on a college campus premise.

This list is far from complete. There are many more films out there, theatrical, made for TV or direct to video with Hunchback characters. There are a thousand and one variations of the Mad Scientist's assistant in live action and cartoon. Heck! Many film and stage versions of *Richard III* could be included, just because the main character is both a Hunchback, and despicable in the extreme. Quite workable as a "Monster" character. Albeit one with a helluva lot more Status than I'd ever allow a character to have! This list is meant to just give a sampling of the variety of Hunchback characters there are in popular culture, and to include some particular examples which influenced the conceptualization of this game.